

LETTERS

FROM THE

DUCHESS DE CRUI AND OTHERS,

ON

SUBJECTS MORAL AND ENTERTAINING,

WHEREIN THE

CHARACTER OF THE FEMALE SEX,

WITH

Their RANK, IMPORTANCE, and CONSEQUENCE,
IS STATED,

And their RELATIVE DUTIES in LIFE are enforced.

By Lady MARY WALKER.

THE SECOND EDITION, corrected.

V O L. I.

L O N D O N,

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MDCCLXXVII.



TO THE
QUEEN.

MADAM,

THE world may condemn my performance, but it must applaud my choice in this address. Although it may be easy to baffle, or evade the force of my written arguments, respecting the eminent qualifications of women, yet the fact will remain indisputable, when they contemplate those of your Majesty.

I am perfectly sensible of the necessity of making an apology to your

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Majesty

iv DEDICATION.

Majesty for this presumption ; but since I am unable to acquit myself as I wish, I intreat from your goodness that *indulgence*, which I cannot expect from your *justice* ; and that you will be graciously pleased to accept this, my first performance, which is most humbly offered, by

Your Majesty's most devoted,

most obedient, and

most humble servant,

MARY WALKER.

TO THE
P U B L I C.

THESE Letters stand so much in need of an apology, that the author assures her readers, they should not have been troubled with them upon any consideration of her own. They were written in her nursery, surrounded by her children, for whose use only they were originally intended. Her friends wished her to commit them to the press; but the dread of such an undertaking, the knowledge of the world, and of herself, prevented

vented her compliance, till, being farther importuned, she acquiesced, with this difference, that she has given them another dress, because few books are read but romances, by the juvenile part of mankind, who are too apt to neglect religious and moral instructions, if they do not appear in the alluring garb of amusement.

The gay world regards solid endowments as ridiculous ; but persons of understanding will ever acknowledge that the improvement of their own minds, and those of others, is a laudable pursuit.

The author has ever lamented the fate of her sex being condemned to ignorance, or prevented from exercising their noblest mental faculties. She has, therefore, endeavoured to make them conscious of their capacity for attaining any knowledge to which they may aspire. It cannot
be

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be unattended with advantage, to open our minds to the accession of new ideas, and to habituate ourselves to examine, to compare, to reflect, and to distinguish; in order to enlarge the sphere of our knowledge, and enoble our intellects. Is it not then to be regretted, that women in general content themselves with frivolous pursuits?

She has nothing to add, but that she has avoided letting fall any thing that has a tendency to mislead the understanding, or to blemish the morals; and as she has introduced no fictitious virtues; neither has she admitted any extenuation for vice, as excusable from habit, or constitution. In short, nothing is recommended that may corrupt under the disguise of informing. It is probable the reader may see her thoughts are such as naturally arose from a knowledge

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ledge of the world; and, therefore, before he concludes she is mistaken, hopes he will have recourse to the same school, and try her not by *opinion*, but *experience*; not by *logic*, but by *life*.



L E T T E R I.

From the Duchefs de CRUI, to Mrs.
PIERPONT, at Liege.

Brussels.

DEAR MADAM,

YOU have done me great honour
in calling upon me to give you
my opinion of subjects, the discussion
of which there is no person among my
female acquaintance so equal to as your-
self. To whom, indeed, I owe many of
the observations, which I shall hazard in
my future correspondence. The num-
berless Essays, and Books, which have
been written concerning our sex, and by
some of themselves, have afforded a suf-

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ficient

ficient proof of the excellency of their talents, the liveliness of their imaginations, the quickness of their parts, and the justness of their sentiments; yet your partiality prevails so far as to insist on my taking up the pen. La Bruyere declares, "that we are come into the world too late to produce any thing new; that nature and life are pre-occupied; and that description and sentiment have been exhausted."—I must confess, however, that I cannot subscribe to such opinions. Science is (from the observations I have made) in a continued progression; and it is even our fault, if we are not wiser than our fore-fathers, or indeed, if we are not wiser this year than we were the last.

Flattered as I am, by your request, I shall give you a proof of my ready obedience by immediately entering on the task,

task, and pursuing it with the most unremitted attention as far as time will permit me, or my observation, information, or abilities extend. But you must not call me a plagiarist, for sometimes having recourse to my common place-book, and for taking the freedom of using such sentiments as will tend to illustrate my ideas ; from whatever author I may have borrowed them, I shall give their names, when I recollect them : but to trace the origin of my ideas, would be an endless task, and would be a history of itself ; and it would be no unentertaining, no unuseful enquiry to examine the progress of our minds, and to mark by what degrees, or through what means, we arrive at the different stages of truth and error. But this is no part of the task you have imposed upon *me*, and I willingly resign it to a better pen. I have had so

L E T T E R I.

many proofs of your candour on other occasions, that I need not desire you to over-look the inaccuracies that may appear in my style or method. All I shall aim at, is to be understood; and if you express your desire that I should proceed, I shall be justified to myself in continuing my reveries.

On the contrary, I shall as readily obey your commands in laying down my pen, as in taking it up. *Escape*, not *victory*, is all I contend for: and I faithfully promise, that, in my behaviour on the occasion, I shall not imitate the *archbishop* with *Gil Blas*, being very sensible it requires no *Aristarchus* to discover the imperfections of my pen. You have desired me particularly to acquaint you what my opinion is, in regard to a great many subjects relative to our sex, and the source from whence arise some of our
prin-

principal defects ; I therefore communicate to you my *family narrative*, which consists of a number of letters written by respectable friends—*their* sentiments will supply the defects of *mine* ; and will animate me so far as to enable me to fill up the chasms in their correspondence, to render the story complete and interesting to my young friends—This I hope will relieve me from writing, on some of those subjects you desired, as you will find in these letters, observations on the various situations and occurrences in life.

I am ever, my dear Madam,

most affectionately yours,

ELIZA DE CRUI.

L E T T E R II.

From the Duchefs de CRUI, to Mrs.
PIERPONT, at Leige.

THE Earl of F——, at the age of sixteen, by the death of his father, found himself poffeffed of a clear eftate of five thoufand pounds a year, befides a large fum of money in the funds. His father had been as avaricious as wealthy, and denied himfelf almoft every thing which makes the life of the rich fuperior to that of the poor: he had no idea of any other pleafure, but that of poffeffing what he could not enjoy, which, you will allow, is a kind of poverty but little different from real want. The hand that *cannot* touch it, and the heart which *will not*, are hardly diftinguifhable in their effects.

Although

Although this unhappy disposition had enriched his son; yet his lordship, and his two sisters, were, in consequence of it, totally deficient in accomplishments suitable to their birth, nay, were even defective in the most common accomplishments of youth. To save a few pounds in wages, the children of the late Earl of F—— had been put under the care of ignorant low-bred people, absolutely unqualified for so great a trust. His amiable countess (like virtue) never had the esteem she merited from him—Her temper was all serenity; having no pleasure in the thoughts of ambition, she was content to conform to her lord's retired way of living: but, when she saw his parsimony extended to her children, she ventured, for the first time, to expostulate with him on that subject; and when she found her entreaties inef-

fectual,

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fectual, the shock was too great for her tender spirits ; she fell into a deep melancholy, and a consumption soon terminated her life. By her death, her children were cut off from the only resource they had for improvement—Thus did the late Earl exemplify in himself the truth of Mr. Pope's observation, that

“ One master passion in the breast,
“ Like Aaron's serpent, swallows all the rest.”

Lord F——, being then young, ignorant, and rich, is it surprising that his house became a scene of debauchery, and he a *prey* to those harpies, who never fail to hover over young men of large fortune ?—Luckily for his lordship, he was rescued from his extravagancies by a very extraordinary event. One of his intimate friends was taken up for a highway robbery, dragged from his presence by the officers of justice, and

and afterwards condemned and executed. This impressed his young mind with horror ; he became sensible of the dissoluteness of his associates, most of whom had been introduced to him by Mr. Plot, an attorney in the neighbourhood ; it having been this man's interest to divert the mind of Lord F——, and disengage him from his relations, that he might have the better opportunity to manage his fortune for *himself*.

Sir James Bruce, Lord F——'s uncle, at this time repeated his admonitions, which before had been disregarded, but which were now joyfully attended to : age may preach, but youth must purchase its own experience. The young Earl, humbled by the discovery of the insufficiency of his own judgment, placed himself entirely under his direction. Sir James prevailed on Mr. Lewis, a clergyman

clergyman of great worth, to undertake the difficult task of withdrawing him from his vices, and to insinuate such instruction to him, as his mind should be found capable of receiving. Mr. Lewis possessed an estate of eight hundred a year, and left a very good living to accompany Lord F——, at Sir James Bruce's desire, there having long been an intimate acquaintance between them. He was greatly beloved in his parish, and though a man of profound erudition, entertained his audience only with plain and intelligent discourses, as he never meant to *dazzle*, but *lead* the blind. *Preaching* and *practising* require different talents, which, when united in the same person, constitute the true christian: as *wit* and *judgment*, going together, constitute a true genius.

Mr.

Mr. Lewis knew not the mistakes of the head, or heart, but from the experience of others : and, as it was said of Coriolanus, he had a natural aversion to vice. He smoothed (to his parishioners) the bed of sickness, by the soothing suggestions of hope for better hours, and a happier state hereafter, and even talked away the stings of death from minds which had not been much distracted by great crimes : he frequently restored the rosy hue of health to the livid cheek, and fire to the lifeless eye of sickening beauty, by his medicinal applications. By his means the temple of Janus was shut, and peace dwelt amongst the inhabitants of his cure. Of so much advantage is one good man to those over whom he is placed ! As the sun gives colours to all the objects of the earth, so does a true divine impart hap-

happiness and character to all those on whom he shines superior. Philosophy, which in the minds of so many others produces a singular mixture of truth and illusion, was formed in his mind, by reflection and experience, into a system of ideas equally simple, useful, and practicable: a system which seemed to come nearer to truth than any other which ennobled human nature, without puffing it up; and opened its views into better worlds, without totally abstracting it from this, or making it useless in its present state.

Mr. Lewis was not subject to casualties, for fortune hath nothing to do with the mind. He lived subject neither to time nor its frailties; the servant of virtue, and by virtue the friend of the Highest.

He

He had been repeatedly solicited some months before, by the friends of the Duke of M——, to attend him abroad ; but had declined it, as he could not be induced to it by any pecuniary reward.—As a change of scene was judged necessary to cut off all Lord F——'s former connections, they set out for a villa in Wales, which had been engaged for that purpose. It was a place formed by nature for all kinds of country sports, as Mr. Lewis knew the necessity of relieving a studious application with intervals of relaxation ; thus health is preserved, and without which it is impossible to render our virtues or actions useful to ourselves or society.

Whatever advantage we snatch beyond the certain portion granted us by nature, is like money spent before it is due, which at the time of regular payment will

will be missed and regretted. He also procured for the companion of Lord F——, a young gentleman of distinguished abilities, who assisted him in *stealing instruction on him*, rooting out his errors, and strengthening his every propensity to truth, order, and literary improvement.

I am ever, dear Madam,

Your affectionate

humble servant,

ELIZA DE CRUI.

L E T T E R III.

From the Same to the Same.

DEAR MADAM,

AT the time Sir James Bruce had so judiciously disposed of Lord F——, he sent his two sisters to Lady Filmer, who had obligingly consented to take the charge of them. As this Lady will make no inconsiderable figure in the following pages, it is necessary I should delineate her character to you. She had no pretensions to beauty, being in her forty sixth year ; however, she had a tall agreeable person, a pleasing countenance, a noble air, and was one of the most accomplished of her sex. Lady Filmer was a faithful wife, an affectionate mother, and a sincere friend. She had, it is true, a particular veneration
for

for people of birth, but it never made her overlook the meanest beggar; nor did her love of the sciences prevent her from the strictest attention to her æconomical arrangements.

She thought a neglect of a single duty endangers the infringement of the whole: that a well-stated *rule* is like the *line*; when that is once past, we are under another hemisphere; so the first straying from a rule, is a step towards making that which was before a virtue, to change its nature, and grow either into a vice, or an impertinence.

Lady Filmer considered profusion and parsimony as two extremes equally to be avoided, and generosity as the happy medium betwixt them. She had the tenderest heart that ever beat in a female bosom, and could not behold even those who deserved it in pain, without “feeling

ing herself the most exquisite anguish of heart."

Though she was sensible of injuries, she never resented them ; and won the hearts of those who are charmed with the softer studies of humanity.

She wisely considered *home* as the female theatre for action ; that it is there alone we can ascertain a woman's merit.

∴ Her house resembled the internal mechanism of the animal body, in which every thing is employed in continual labour, without our being sensible of any motion, while the external parts are at rest. She held in utter contempt the duties imposed on us by fashion, which are innumerable ; because those who would fulfil them could not have half an hour to spare for books, a husband, or a friend ; as from women of fashion, the politeness of the age requires no other

occupation than that of pleasure, and no other knowledge than that of the world, no other duty than that of *not* living in open defiance to morality. She pitied those fine ladies, who are constantly governed by their love and their aversion ; and who have no command of their passions : whose wisdom and virtue are inferior to their beauty—Their charms, though the gift of Heaven, become equally fatal to themselves as to their admirers : their lives are continually perplexed between the desire of pleasing, and the pain of being neglected : the wildest passion of their lovers exposes them less than their own natural inconstancy and vanity : add to this, that if their good nature exceeds their pride, they are doubly miserable, as their attractions bring upon them sollicitations they want the power to resist, which makes them
slaves

slaves to the tyranny and caprices of love. Such were the sentiments of Lady Filmer ; but at the same time she thought, that, as members of society, we ought not only to cultivate the duties which may render us useful to others, but also the agreeable arts which afford pleasure to those with whom we converse. Her maxim was, we owe something to society, but more to ourselves, a few hours to folly, and the rest to reason. Her opinion was, that none spend their time properly, who do not live by some rule, who do not appropriate the hours, as near as may be, to particular purposes and employments. She was parsimonious in nothing but her time, of which she made the best improvement, with the least loss of any person I ever was acquainted with ; and always urged, that whoever does not attempt perfection, will sink far

below mediocrity. ✧ She had a few faults, as shades to these perfections; the first of these would have been insupportable in two thirds of our sex: she was apt in company to engross the conversation, and to deliver her sentiments in too peremptory and decisive a manner on the subject debated: she happened, indeed, to be generally in the right, but a failing of this kind, though it may be *borne*, yet cannot be *defended*. Yet surely it is impossible to have superior talents to the vulgar, without feeling our superiority; and not very easy to conceal it. Lady Filmer's other foibles, were too high an idea of the prerogatives of her own sex, and a too great partiality in favour of people of rank, as has been before observed. She maintained that there is in every thing a secret principle implanted by nature, which gives a certain

tain force and propriety at the beginning, and stamps some peculiar image and resemblance of itself, in all the productions which flows from it; as appears, not only in the race of horses, but other animals: but also in trees, whose scions generally resemble the stock they came from; and if at any time they degenerate, it proceeds from some mismanagement, and want of care. This was a favourite subject with her Ladyship; which she carried sometimes too far, to the discomposure of Sir John, her husband, who had accumulated a large fortune by trade; and, in consequence of many transactions he had with people of rank, held them, in general, in little esteem. He used frequently to reason with Lady Filmer on this subject, and said, "Titles do not impose on me, I regard the *statue* not its *pedestal*: men

in this age, either inherit titles from their worthy ancestors, purchase them, or receive them as *rattles*, to *still ambition*. Birth, worthily lived up to, is virtue. We cannot command bright talents, and extensive capacities, but we may make those we have, useful to ourselves and others : we cannot command the gifts of fortune, or titles, but we may deserve them : we cannot all be *great*, but every body may be *good*. I respect the circumstance of birth, only as it is an additional motive to virtue ; but in fact, it is only the gift of chance, often unnecessary to our happiness : I am far from despising those who have not this advantage. In the general scale of beings, the lowest is as useful, and as much a link of the great chain, as the highest : nothing is mean in my eyes but vice. Let us always remember,
that

that true greatness of mind, consists in a contempt of all those customs and opinions not founded on reason and common sense. Dean Swift, says, "*That he who makes a pile of grass or corn grow where it did not grow before, is a greater man than Julius Cæsar.*" If true greatness consists in being rather useful to society than in making a shining figure in it; his remark is certainly just. As merit can render those illustrious who are but of mean extraction, vice will make those infamous that are of the best families. This was the only subject on which Sir John and Lady Filmer disagreed: he always insisted on it with warmth, justly considering it as almost her only foible. Sir John was master of every subject, had thought *much*, and had contemplated every thing deserving attention with an accuracy, a taste,

and an elegance, peculiar to men who have improved their minds by observations on real life, a sober exercise of the understanding, and a judicious course of study. His conversation was consequently highly entertaining; he had a great share of good sense, and his disposition was full of sweetness and benevolence; he had the genuine art of pleasing to perfection, for he made those with whom he conversed pleased with themselves, and filled them with good-humour, proceeding from self-complacency: through his eyes shot forth the living emanations of a good heart, and the pure ray of intellect; cheerfulness glowed on his countenance and promised a pleasing reception, to the stranger, who, after spending a whole day in his family, was apt to mistake the house for his own. Every one there might
do

do as they pleased ; and when he made entertainments, his friends told him they were not only pleased while they were enjoying them, but also upon recollection. At eight in the morning, and nine at night, Sir John, and Lady Filmer, always themselves, retired to their chapel, where their domestic chaplain read prayers. Is it not reasonable to suppose, that the regular and stated worship of God in a family, must have a happy influence on the conduct and tempers of those who attend it? A continual sense of our dependence is thereby kept up : we are often put in mind of what we owe the divine goodness, and the frequent acknowledgments of our offences may make us ashamed to repeat them. How can we love God if we never hear him mentioned in a becoming manner? It absolutely requires

quires a greater portion of grace than is given to every one. Sir John had a daughter by a former marriage (your humble servant); who was consigned by my mistaken mother, on her death-bed, to the care of her *mother*; by these means, I have made a very different figure in life, from what it is probable I might have done, had I been under the direction of Lady Filmer. The only child Sir *John* had by her Ladyship: was a son, who was abroad at the period above mentioned, when the Lady F——s came to Filmer-Place. I am almost afraid, my dear friend, I have fatigued you with my description of this worthy pair. But I must yet acquaint you, that as my father possessed a very large estate, and only two children, he erected a school for the instruction of youth — In limiting the numbers to
twenty

twenty of each sex, he did violence to his own benevolence ; but wisely judged, that his heirs, from difference of circumstances, might not be in the same situation with himself, and that withdrawing a donation must render a man noxious ; since, when any charity has been long established, they who reap the advantage of it are apt to plead prescription. Do you not think, my dear madam that the charity which provides for the *morals*, as well as the *bodily wants* of the poor, gives a double benefit to the *public*, as it adds to the number of the *hopeful* what it takes from that of the *profligate* ?

Sir John, and Lady Filmer, had formerly been very intimate with Sir James, and Lady Bruce : the latter's bad health had prevented their meeting for ten years past.

As

As the Earl of F—— had lived constantly in retirement, Lady Filmer was totally unacquainted with the history of their family ; and as she had no daughter of her own, she accepted Sir James Bruce's offer of taking the Lady F——s under her protection. As Sir John had told her they were very handsome, in justice to her favourite hypothesis, she could not doubt of their knowledge, politeness, and intellectual accomplishments being agreeable to their high descent. He was determined to prove to her, in these young ladies, the futility of her reasoning on this point ; and the better to enjoy her surprize, concealed a letter he had received from Sir James Bruce, and which you will find here inclosed. When the young ladies arrived, figure to yourself her surprize, when instead of finding them elegant and accomplished, she beheld

beheld two country rustics, awkward in their manner, and scarcely intelligible, from their provincial dialect ! It is to be observed, the people of fashion in Scotland, speak with great propriety ; but these young ladies, (as has already been observed,) had never associated with any people but servants.

Lady Filmer's partiality still prevailing, she recollected the use of language is only to convey our ideas to one another : and as every country has its own peculiar dialect, to speak the purest is only a kind of local merit. A Greek philosopher, justly commended for the sweetness of his style, was known to be a stranger by a fruit-woman at Athens. She still flattered herself, they had well-informed understandings, and imputed their awkwardness to country education, and a too close application.

tion. The second day after dinner, she put Milton's *Paradise Lost* into the hands of Lady Sophia, (the eldest of the young ladies, being then seventeen years old) requesting the favour she would read aloud a part she pointed out. This she thought would afford her an opportunity of judging of her reading, and as it was a passage with which she was perfectly acquainted, she could the better understand her pronunciation. Lady Sophia excused herself, saying, "*Indeed she could not read.*" "It is indeed, my dear, replied Lady Filmer, a difficult matter to read well : sweetness of voice, clearness and delicacy of pronunciation, propriety of accent, spirit, ease, and harmony, are not alone sufficient : we require besides, a complete and perfect imitation, an expression which gives to each part of the work, to each period, and to each

each

each verse, the life and the pathos it ought to have. In a word, my dear Lady Sophia, the manner of reading should be such, as the ear should supply the place of all other senses : but be not discouraged, I make no doubt but you will answer this description." This long harangue was as unintelligible to Lady Sophia, as an Etruscan inscription is to our *literati*. She paused, blushed, and said, " I know not what your Ladyship means." Lady Filmer was too much astonished to speak ; she stood like Atlas, turned into stone by the petrifying virtue of Medusa's head.

Sir John enjoyed her embarrassment, and observed, smiling, he had always imagined that a Lord's daughter could read, and do every thing else by intuition. " From what I know of the matter, added he, (pardon me young ladies)

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it is the only way you could know any thing." He then gave my lady the inclosed letter, which, when she had read, she said, the young Lady's want of information was a great reproach to nobility; and proposed to Sir John, to procure them private instruction before they should be sent to school, that their extreme ignorance might not be exposed.

Farewell, my dear Friend. Mr. Pope says, "That the letters of friends are no worse for being fit for none else to read;" and the certainty that none else will read my letters but you and your family, makes me easy in that respect.

I ever am

most faithfully

Yours,

ELIZA DE CRUI.

LETTER IV.

Sir JAMES BRUCE to Sir JOHN FILMER.

DEAR SIR,

THE melancholy situation of my family has prevented me, for some years past, from paying my respects to you, either personally or by writing. Your humanity would easily furnish an excuse for me, were you witness of the acute anguish of heart I daily undergo, in beholding the most amiable of her sex, suffer the most unremitted torments. Lady Bruce has had a cancer in her breast these ten years ; her exemplary patience and resignation exceed credibility.

I hope Lady Filmer is in perfect health. It is with great pleasure I hear

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such

such agreeable accounts of Mr. Filmer from abroad; who, every body says, is worthy of his parents. As it is so long since I had the honour of seeing you, it is necessary I should inform you of some circumstances relative to my family-connections, previous to a petition. I shall take the liberty of presenting to Lady Filmer. About two years ago, the earl of F——, my brother-in-law, died, I believe I may safely add, *to the joy of that noble family*. This may be easily accounted for, when I tell you, he had (once) a wife, children, and relations; but he had neither cares for their welfare, nor tears for their distress: he bore their afflictions with the most christian patience, and kissed the rod with which Providence had chastised them; conforming precisely to that Stoical precept of Epictetus, “If thy friend
be

be in extremity, thou mayest then say, thou hast pity on him, but be sure not to feel any, because that is an infirmity beneath the dignity of man." But Lord F—— carried this sentiment still farther; in imitation of what we are told of a certain nation, he wept when any children were born to him, and laughed when they died. He distilled money from the tears of the poor, and grew fat upon their curses. If he ever repeated the Lord's Prayer, of forgiving our debts, as we forgive our debtors, like a witch's prayer, he always repeated it backwards: and sportsman like, placed all his enjoyment in the *pursuit*, being destitute of either leisure or taste, for the proper enjoyment of his wealth. Leaving no will, the young Earl, at the age of sixteen, who had never before been master of half a crown, found

himself possessed of a large fortune, his two sisters being left entirely dependant on him. Upon this occasion I waited on my nephew ; but found he had been prepossessed before my arrival, and taught to consider me as an impertinent censor, who would send him to school : so that all my arguments were of no effect, and what hurt me most, the girls seemed to have adopted the same ideas. I returned home, penetrated with real sorrow for irregularities occasioned by ignorance : the confusion of tongues must have been order and intelligence, compared to what passed in this mansion. I was obliged to consider him, at that time, as a person in the delirium of a fever, or one of those unfortunate madmen whom nature frequently presents to us, as mortifying spectacles of humanity. Advice given unasked is troublesome

blesome to the receiver, and consequently useless ; but, before my departure, I thought it my duty to urge the necessity of his sisters going to town for their education : he answered, they had all been unhappy long enough, and that now they should be otherwise. Youth seldom looks beyond the present moment, and its views terminate in the object it enjoys. Lord F—— grew warm, and even insinuated, he had been informed I was directed by my own views, in desiring to get the management of him and his fortune into my hands : I contented myself with telling him, “ Young man, when you know me better, you will be convinced that whenever I pretend to give advice, I should abhor myself if I did not wholly consider the good of the persons to whom I gave it, or had a view to my own inter-

rest which might in the least affect them." A happy accident has restored him to reason : he is now abroad, with a gentleman of great worth and distinguished abilities, who has undertaken the very difficult task of forming his mind. My fears are, that, like the snail, he will carry too much of home on his back, to make any progress in the knowledge of men and things ! But, not to take up sorrow at interest, let us wait events, when nothing in our power can prevent them. His two sisters, he has submitted to my direction. The unhappy situation of my family would preclude their coming to Bruce Hill, if their extreme ignorance did not render it necessary for them to go to London ; where their education may be accelerated by masters we cannot command at York. Besides, shall
I own

I own to you, I am fearful of introducing Lady Sophia to my *innocent rustics*, being ignorant of what bad qualities she may have imbibed from her brother's associates. Lady Harriet is too young for me to form any idea of her character: she is at present naturally the echo of her sister.

In general, children do not resemble more in family features, than in family habits; and family *minds* are as often transmitted as family *faces*.

Now, my dear friend, after telling you the state of our affairs; if Lady Filmer would condescend to take the direction of these *lasses*, and place them at a school, &c. she would confer a very high obligation on Lady Bruce, and myself. They are very *beautiful*, and no expence need be attended to, in their education. I must confess, at pre-

sent, *they* are but badly qualified for doing honour to Lady Filmer's two favourite subjects, *female virtue* and *exalted birth* : her Ladyship's letters to me on that subject, wrote fifteen years ago, I carefully preserve. But her *conduct*, not her *writing*, made me a convert to her tenets.

May we not, my dear friend, from our experience, declare, that they who maintain that women have no virtue, have never associated but with the dregs of the sex, and are below the censure of the sensible and rational.

Lady Bruce desires her compliments to you, and joins with me in best respects to Lady Filmer : I remain, with great regard, dear Sir,

Your obedient,

humble Servant,

JAMES BRUCE.

L E T T E R V.

From Mrs. PIERPONT to the Duchess
DE CRUI, at Bruffels.

DEAR MADAM,

HOW much am I honoured and edified by your highness's kind condescension ! Indeed, my dear Madam, words are wanting to express the exalted idea we entertain of you : the delight and instruction conveyed in your letters, are very salutary to my young ones ; they dwell with such rapture on every sentiment, that, I hope, it will become their own. How much do we admire Lady Filmer's character, which can only be equalled by your highness's candour and humility. How defective do I find myself, when with you, or
when

when I hear of you from others. Her family arrangements I greatly approve ; what a blessing it was for the Lady F——s to have such a monitress ! Her school for the infant poor must have procured her the blessings of the neighbourhood. I am afraid I have but badly fulfilled the duties of beneficence, for want of knowledge : my views have hitherto been confined to that of relieving bodily distresses. These extend no farther than to the good of the individual ; education, on the contrary, is productive of infinite advantages, extending its influence to society, and may operate upon posterity to the end of the world. What a mistaken idea do the men form of a learned lady : the only fault which a woman, that has abilities and a fluency of words, is likely to fall into, is impertinence. But where talents are
given

given, should we wish them either to be *uncultivated* or *unacknowledged*? The part which we have to act in life is respectable, and nature has given us all the necessary requisites to perform it. Virtue, truth, and knowledge, are the only objects worthy of our being solicitous after; and these we have minds capable of reaching in the most perfect manner. In a word, we have no other certain means to secure happiness to ourselves, through life, but by a steady pursuit of virtue and prudence. I would not have my daughters pedantic, nor do I require them to be learned: their situations in life will probably be so obscure, that any affectation of distinction would be highly detrimental to them. An exalted situation in point of rank and fortune, can alone procure merit its eulogy, as the superiority precludes

cludes rivalry ; for in equality of situations, extraordinary talents are, of themselves, sufficient provocation for hatred. I wish them only to receive such of the advantages of education, as may make them be considered as rational and valuable members of society : all that can be learned by women, without neglecting the useful knowledge of their sex, I would have them learn : this will show that they are good œconomists of their time, and that they have not had a narrow or confined education : but I would not have them, for these, give up the more necessary, and therefore not meaner employments, which will qualify them to be useful and agreeable members of society, and good mistresses of a family. I breed up my girls frugally : they will not easily get husbands : men of great fortunes will look higher,
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men of small fortunes must look out to enlarge them, and men of genteel professions are justly afraid of every young woman whose birth and education are superior to her fortune : as luxury has placed every thing in the class of necessities, the expences it occasions are with difficulty defrayed ; consequently men's affections must be subordinate to their interest.

This subject often occurs to me, and gives me infinite uneasiness. A single woman is an undefended, unsupported creature ; her early connections, year by year drop off, no new ones arise, and she remains solitary and unheeded, in a busy bustling world ; perhaps soured too by her unconnected state. Yet the calamities of an unhappy wife are so much greater than can befall a single person, that the unmarried woman may find
abun-

abundant arguments to be contented with her condition. I often likewise think, in regard to my son, that if a man happen to be poor, it is a disadvantage to have been born or bred a gentleman ; because it is likely he may never be able to advance his fortunes ; mean persons have many ways of raising themselves to opulence ; because they will fawn, flatter, and use all methods, however base and servile, for their own purposes. *Fruits must be planted : mushrooms spring of themselves.* I blame myself for my anxiety : is it not *God*, who governs the world, and permits some things, and directs the others as he pleases ? And will he not reward *temporal sufferings*, innocently and piously supported, with eternal felicity ? And has not Almighty God placed certain intimations in the soul, which assure it, that
however

however agreeable the Deity may have rendered the present state, it is but a passage which, upon the easy terms of our acting properly to *him*, and to each *other*, will lead us gently along, till it terminates in eternity. I am ever your highness's

affectionate, obliged,

and sincere friend,

ANNA PIERPONT.

P. S. If it will not interrupt your highness's family-narrative, I should intreat a sight of (if in your possession) the letters Sir James Bruce mentions to have received from Lady Filmer.

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L E T T E R VI.

From Mr. LEWIS, to Sir JAMES BRUCE.

DEAR SIR,

North Wales.

I Have the satisfaction to acquaint you
 Lord F—— has exceeded every sanguine expectation I could have formed for him.—His diligence, and application, are beyond what you can conceive. You enquire of me by what methods I have accomplished this : as my plan has been very simple, it will be the easier explained. After an accurate, and close application to the developing his character, I found his heart *good*, and his passions *strong* : I have endeavoured to preserve him from their attendant evils : and formed great hopes from the native
 sweet-

sweetness of his disposition, and the tenderness and attention I meant to exert, to divert and entertain him. I have been watchful over his conduct, while I affected to trust it entirely to himself; being very sensible a youth of seventeen, who hath once tasted of guilty pleasures, will with great difficulty be restrained, or induced to regularity, or application. I seemed to indulge him, by contributing to his gratifications, in every thing I could approve of; and my attention in this particular confirmed my power. Innocent pleasures were the only means to create in him a disgust to the contrary. I have expressed always respect and esteem for him; judging it a good method to prevent ingenuous minds from such actions as are unworthy of them. By these means I have never reduced him to the temptation of deceiv-

50 L E T T E R VI.

ing me, which would have rendered falsehood habitual to him; as at first a seeming necessity may force a young man to dissemble, although he has a natural aversion to it; but this aversion will wear off by degrees, dissimulation will become familiar; he will make a jest of it, and then *all is lost*. I have therefore been particularly careful to preserve the ingenuousness of his disposition; and even led him to perceive, from my reserve, the fear I was under of drawing him into an occasion of speaking an untruth: this created in him a detestation of a vice into which an indiscreet severity hath plunged so many young people. Constraint gives rise to dissimulation, falsehood, and a meanness of spirit that excludes all hopes of reformation.

L E T T E R VI. 51

Is not this (even at an earlier age) a much better manner of teaching youth, than severity? The soul readily inclines to virtue when it is pointed out with delicacy. I am convinced when man came from the hand of his Creator, he had the knowledge of truth and goodness. Sin darkened his knowledge, without being able entirely to extinguish those internal luminaries which had been lighted up by the hand of God. A man without motives for thinking wrong, will think right. He feels many compunctions before he can reconcile himself to intemperance, and is pleased with himself when virtuous: his natural ideas of truth determine and influence him, unless the prevalence of some passion obliges him to do violence to his natural intelligence. Doctor Young has a very just sentiment, in his Centaur: "We

cannot think too highly of our *natures*, nor too meanly of *ourselves*." A bad opinion of human nature readily produces a selfish disposition, and renders the temper chearless and unsociable : if there be any method forcible enough to reclaim from wickedness, must it not be that exalted generosity, which returns good for evil : while severity, which is often revenge under the cloak of justice, confirms evil dispositions, by producing a hatred of mankind. Nature is said to abhor a vacuum : Lord F——'s mind, from defects of education though formerly over-run with the vilest weeds ; I have since discovered it to be a soil for great sentiments to take root, and flourish in. Montaigne, upon the subject of children's education, blames the too great severity of parents, who often take greater care to be *feared* than

than *loved*. He relates, that a person of distinction (a friend of his) who had lost his only son, a youth of great hopes in the army, in discoursing with him on the affliction such a loss must be, said " My greatest grief is, that having brought up my son with too much severity, he did not know the tenderness I had for him : and, alas ! he died without being sensible how much I loved him." Is not this a good lesson to parents ? Severity is only useful to remedy those evils which our own negligence creates ; there is no occasion for it in a system of education, in which we ought so continually to watch over the obscure rise of evil habits, as by leaving no room for nature to take a wrong bias, to render it unnecessary to employ any harshness to correct. A great man, who has been persecuted by a world he has en-

lightened, has sufficiently detailed the principal maxims of education. This chiefly consists in presenting to the mind a small number of select objects; in substituting the originals for the copies, both of physical and moral phænomena, in leading the pupil to virtue by the easy road of sentiment, and with-holding him from evil by the infallible power of necessary inconveniencies, rather than by command, which only obtains a counterfeit and momentary obedience. This corresponds entirely with my opinion, and is what I would recommend for youth. From the intenseness of Lord F——'s feelings, on the recollection of his past errors, I am convinced, if any other plan had been pursued with him, by this time he would have been good for nothing. I have rarely known a man make a good figure in life after he has
been

been publicly disgraced : shame is a powerful restraint, and when men have got over it, they generally proceed from bad to worse.

This is often seen in the army, where it is observed, the minds of men who have been often punished become quite insensible.

The being dissatisfied with ourselves, is a sentiment too painful for the soul to be able to endure. To alleviate my Lord's uneasiness, I have endeavoured to put him in credit with himself : the tender and insinuating air with which I have always addressed him, has contributed to the confidence he has placed in me : the transition from respect to affection is no easy step, especially with young people, who seldom *love* what they have been accustomed to *fear*. Real tenderness and true friendship are never

imperious ; they may propose their wishes, but they exact nothing.

There are a number of people valuable for their sincerity, whom, though we cannot forbear respecting, we can never be brought to love : on reflection we know they deserve our love, and yet how frequently do we find ourselves inclined to hate them ! their frankness is often so uncivil, that it offends and disgusts us : they will give us their advice, which we approve of, and yet find in ourselves a reluctance to follow it. Why is this ? It is, because they want that address and delicacy, which is requisite to endear us to their counsel. In addressing us, they seem to direct us, and this offends our pride. Sensible of this, I have endeavoured to clothe my instruction in all the charms of sensibility : he has a feeling heart, we
reject

reject not the lesson, which insinuates itself through our affections. I have remonstrated to his lordship, that as soon as we are conscious of our errors, remorse should cease : as its continuance would only deprive us of the power of correcting our faults, and would therefore be as prejudicial, as too great a degree of timidity, which only serves to expose us more certainly to the danger we should endeavour to avoid by prudence, or oppose with resolution. Confucius has well observed, “ That virtue does not consist in never erring, which is impossible, but in recovering from error as fast as possible.” In short, my dear Sir, I have endeavoured, and I hope not without success, to steal instruction on him, as it were without imposing it ; otherwise he would have regarded my counsels as lessons, and lessons are ever dis-

displeasing. I have strenuously urged to him, the necessity of a due regard to religion, honour, and probity. That he should learn as much of the sciences as are necessary for his situation : that he should be virtuous and accomplished, a christian and a man of courage. That by temperance we perform the acts of all other virtues, and it is useful not only to the person himself who possesses it, but to others ; when the mind is turned by this harmony, by the intervention of reason, it afterwards receives true courage, which makes it intrepid and serene in all dangers, and in a manner above all human passions. As he had so much to acquire (exclusive of what he was to be weaned from), I have not urged the necessity of his learning Latin. He is now, however, almost master of the French and Italian Languages.

guages. It is observed in the natural world, no change is instantaneous, but all its vicissitudes are gradual and flow. The motions of intellect proceed in the like imperceptible progression, and proper degrees of transition from one study to another, are therefore necessary: I have not suffered his studies to engross him too much, but relieved them by frequent intermissions. A practice consistent with the most exemplary diligence, and which he who omits will find at last, that, like money, time may be lost by unseasonable avarice. As I have often observed it is a common defect in the education of persons of distinction, that they cannot write correctly, I have taken particular care of him in this respect: though it may be pardoned to be ignorant of the sciences, it is inexcusable for a man, not
to

to make himself understood in the common occurrences of life. The books we have read, are those of morality, where the human passions are described, their conduct regulated, the beauties of virtue displayed, and the advantages of a regular life set forth—In short, books, whose subjects recommend the real happiness of mankind, according to the poet :

Virtue, and that part of philosophy
Will I apply, that treats of happiness
By virtue specially to be achieved.

My Lord has also studied geometry : Mr. Locke, you know recommends it even to those who have no design of being geometricians ; and he gives a reason for it, that may be applied to the present case. “ Such persons, said he, may forget every problem that has been proposed, and every solution that they

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or others have given ; but the habit of pursuing long trains of ideas will remain with them, and they will pierce through the mazes of sophism, and discover a latent truth, where persons who have not this habit will not find it." My humble efforts have been crowned with so much success, that I despair not, on my return, of producing a young nobleman who will do honour to his country.

I think it was observed of the ancient schools of declamation, that the more diligently they were frequented, the more was the student disqualified for the world : because he found nothing there, which he could ever meet in another place. My Lord lies not (at least) under this disadvantage ; and I know not, upon the whole, if his deficiencies in some points of literature may not be an advantage to him ; for to pass through
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the education in vogue, without contracting vices, and those gross ones too, there must be a rich fund of natural goodness, the most happy dispositions, an absolute bias to virtue, and a distinguished complexion of soul. It is plain a knowledge of the world, is the most important study for those who are to live in it, and who would wish to act their part with dignity and propriety. It is with pleasure to be observed, that men begin to be weary of theories, which lead to no useful consequence; and have no foundation, but in the imagination of ingenious men. The learned rubbish, under which science has been long choaked up, for the meanest purposes, is, in some measure, removed. The greatest difficulty I found I had to oppose, was a habit his Lordship had contracted of acting upon the impulse of the minute.

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I represented to him, that the man who weakly yields to first impressions, becomes successively the sport of his own passions; that the only remedy against this, is to form solid principles of truth and wisdom; which will always balance the irregular biases of the heart. As it is in this principally that probity consists: that a man, though to all appearance a man of honour, yet if he acts not upon a well settled principle, is always to be mistrusted, for sooner or later he becomes the dupe of his own heart. The young clergyman, who has hitherto been with us, now leaves us—He is a worthy, diligent young man: I take the liberty of recommending him for the living of —. It is now necessary my Lord should have for his companion a man possessed of all the exterior, as well as interior graces; without which, the man
of

of understanding must, in this world, always give way to the fool who is blest with them. I have been so singularly fortunate, as to procure Mr. Trueman, a man of the most extraordinary talents and accomplishments; at the age of twenty-two, he is member of the academies of Padua, Bologna, Rome, and Lyons: he is the most profound scholar, the best dancer; in short, he possesses the most opposite qualifications, and I can no where give you (said my respectable friend Mr. R——) a more just idea of him, than by desiring you to read, in Mr. Pennant's Tour to Scotland, the character of the admirable Crichton, who fell a sacrifice, at the age of twenty-two, to the envy and implacable hatred of his pupil at Mantua; and who was so much lamented that the whole court went into mourning for him.

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In short, after studying him thoroughly, I know no *one* science or accomplishment, that he is not so much master of, as to induce one to suppose he had applied his whole life to the study of *it* alone. Mr. Trueman is of a good family : he travelled with Lord Dacres, but had left him on account of his irregularities, which he could not be a spectator of, without losing the peace of his own mind : this I apprehend must have been attended with inconveniencies to himself, as I do not find he has any independent fortune, and the Duke of A—— had settled very handsomely on him for life, providing he had remained three years with his son. But, with men like him, the black broth of Sparta, with honour and a good conscience, would have a higher relish than all the delicacies of Philip's table without them.

I remain, dear Sir, with best respects
to my Lady, Miss Byron, and all your
family,

Your obedient,

obliged servant,

JAMES LEWIS.

L E T T E R VII.

From the Duchesse de CRUI, to Mrs.
PIERPONT.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

LADY Filmer, about a year after
the Lady F——s were under her
care, sent them to school at——: they
were at this time, notwithstanding all
her

her attentions, no farther advanced than young ladies commonly are at eight years old. A mind unaccustomed to remark, or inexperienced in life, cannot possibly conceive how surprisngly *all* people are influenced by custom and early habits. Lady Sophia proved an instance of this, and that virtue or vice depend very essentially on our primary sentiments and examples; which, whether good or bad, or will ever attend us in some measure through all possible transactions. It was with the utmost difficulty Lady Sophia could be prevailed on to apply herself to any thing: if Lady Filmer had possessed more ordinary talents, she would have comprehended many of her instructions better: as it was, they were quite beyond her reach: at the same time it must confessed she had an *enjouement*, an easy flow of spright-

liness, that was very amusing, by not suffering the gloomy side of things to appear, and extracting from them only that which had a reference to chearfulness, and was productive of festivity : but notwithstanding all her wit, it was with pain Lady Filmer was convinced, that, according to the education now in vogue, she might be taught to conceal her faults, but no pains whatever could eradicate them. Lady Harriet, on the contrary, was endued with the most happy disposition : the dawn of her understanding was like the mild and gentle rays of the rising sun : she was so sweetly gentle, so perfectly unassuming, that it was impossible to resist the partiality she inspired at first sight ; add to this the eager desire she had for instruction, so that she made an entire conquest of lady Filmer's heart, who beheld her opening
vir-

virtues with such raptures, as we suppose a guardian angel to feel on the first dawnings of virtue and excellence in his charge. Upon leaving the young ladies at school, on account of Lady Sophia's advanced age, they were placed as parlour-boarders. Lady Filmer privately acquainted the mistress of the boarding school, (a woman of good understanding, and accomplished manners) with her opinion of the young ladies' particular dispositions and talents. " Lady Sophia, said she, I am afraid you will find it difficult to make apply—but I beg you will instruct her, that Christianity is the source of happiness in this world, and in the next: convince her of this truth, and she will never cease to be governed by it; as people of any understanding will always *avoid* what they are

certain will involve them in misery. I am more sanguine in my expectations of Lady Harriet than her sister—I look for perfection in her, but shall be satisfied if her sister rises above mediocrity. She has an extensive capacity, a retentive memory, and is capable of the greatest application: every desire she expresses for acquiring such knowledge as is out of the common course of education, must be assisted, provided it does not interfere with her more necessary studies, or hurt her health by a too close attention. I need not inform you farther, added Lady Filmer, I know your excellent method, and strict observation of your scholars: and shall leave them entirely to your direction, and shall re-visit them again in three months, and mark the progress they

they have made." The Duke thinks, my dear madam, that you should attempt, by all possible means, to elude your husband's dying intestate: I think you should send us your papers, and take every advice concerning it. I write you but a short letter, as I enclose Lady Filmer's letters, which she wrote to Sir James Bruce many years before the commencement of the *family-narrative*. I am ever

truly and

affectionately yours,

ELIZA DE CRUI.

L E T T E R VIII.

From Lady FILMER, to Sir JAMES
BRUCE.

S I R,

MR. Addison tells us, "That one of the best springs of generous and worthy actions is the having generous and worthy thoughts of ourselves ; and that whoever has a mean opinion of the dignity of human nature, will act in no higher capacity than he has allotted himself in his own estimation." A low opinion of our intellectual faculties depresses the genius, as it cuts off all prospect of attaining any eminent degree of knowledge, and of executing any grand and extensive plan of improvement. Is it not then highly necessary for us to attain just notions of the intellectual system,

tem, to enable us to judge how far our capacities extend. Enquiries into human nature, though of the first importance, have been prosecuted with little care, and less success. Enquiries into the structure of the human body, have indeed been prosecuted with great diligence and accuracy : but this was a matter of no great difficulty to the anatomist. The human mind, on the contrary, is an object extremely changeable, *not* the same in two persons on earth, and even varying in the same person. But though it may be a matter of great difficulty to investigate and ascertain the laws of the mental constitution, yet there is no reason to doubt, however fluctuating it may seem, of its being governed by laws as invariable as those of the material system. It has been the misfortune of most of those who have studied the philosophy of the human mind, that

that they have been little acquainted with the structure of the human body, and the laws of the animal œconomy; and yet the mind and body are so intimately connected, and have such a mutual influence on one another, that the constitution of either, examined apart, can never be thoroughly understood. The soul, while confined to the body, is dependent on its organization, in all its operations; and the more or less free or clogged these organs are, the more or less will the soul feel herself free or embarrassed in her exertions. Now as it is well known, that the organs in our sex are of a finer texture than in men, it naturally follows, that had women the same advantages of education as men, there would be no room to doubt but that they would be equal to them, in the sciences, and every branch of useful
know-

knowledge. The same Creator, by the same laws, unites the souls of men and women to their respective bodies; and the soul operating in the same manner in the one and the other, is capable of the same functions in both. We receive the impressions of sense as they do; we retain ideas for the operation of our imaginations as they do; we have the same organs, and apply them to the same purposes: the only difference that can be pointed out between our organs and theirs *is*, that ours are more delicate; and consequently our feelings more exquisite, and our perceptions and sentiments more lively and animated.

“ Spirits are not finely touched,
But to fine issues; nor nature never lends
The smallest scruple of her excellence,
But, like a thrifty goddess, she determines
Herself the glory of a creditor,
Both thanks, and use.”

The

The intuitive faculty cannot (in my opinion) be any way prejudicial to the understanding ; it furnishes a new recruit of spirits, and these give such a radiance, that the ideas present themselves with infinitely greater clearness, force, and evidence ; and it is a proof of this assertion, that all the passions are persuasive and eloquent : the strength and warmth of our sensations, lead us as certainly to truth, as the extent and justness of argument : and when assisted by their informations we may always arrive sooner at the mark in question, than by the cooler reasoning faculties. The rhetoric of the heart is more forcible than that of the understanding. Mr. Thomas, in his excellent Essay on the Character, Genius, and Manners of Women, has given us an historical picture, an assemblage of facts and observations

vations, which evidently prove that women are susceptible of all the qualities, which religion, society, or government, chuse to assign them. The virtues of women are difficult because they have no help from glory to practise them. To live at home employed in domestic occurrences; to be simple, just, and obedient, are painful virtues, because they are obscure. One must have a great deal of merit to shun making a figure, and a great deal of courage to bring one's self to excel only to one's own eyes. Where qualifications are not wanted, they are rarely found: great powers cannot be exerted, but when great exigencies make them necessary: great exigencies can happen but seldom, and therefore those qualities which have a claim to the veneration of mankind lie hid. As life is too short for every

attainment, sensible women naturally cultivate those talents that are most likely to render them beneficial to society. Hence the courage of suffering pain, is what they have in an eminent degree; and has it not been said in their favour, that they would sooner suffer than displease, and would a thousand times rather endure pain than reproach? This is, no doubt, owing to the variety of ills to which we are subjected by nature; there are numbers of women, who, from the natural delicacy of their constitution, pass through one continued scene of suffering, from their cradles to their graves, and with a firmness and resolution that would deserve so many statues to be erected to their memories if heroism were not estimated more by the *splendor* than the *merit* of *actions*.

Women

Women should be conscious of their own *powers* if they wished to exert them with propriety, according to Mr. Addison's observation, when he tells us, " There is not a more improving exercise of the human mind, than to be frequently reviewing its great privileges and endowments ; nor a more effectual means to awaken in us an ambition raised above little pursuits, than to value ourselves as heirs of eternity." Women are educated in this age according to the idea of the Turks ; as if the only intention of their existence was to appear lovely for the first few years of their lives, and afterwards to sink into total oblivion in this world, and unconsciousness in the next. Upon this plan, it must be confessed, those ideas are very just ; for as long as their persons are rendered amiable, it matters not how disgusting their minds may be :
they,

they, therefore, whose charge it is to educate them judiciously, instruct them carefully in music, dancing, dressing, &c. but as to forming their understandings, or cultivating their genius, they are never so much as thought of: on the contrary it seems as if a pleasure was taken in debilitating both the one and the other. There is no distinction of sexes in virtues or vice; and whatever has been once determined to be the point of honour, in man or woman, will be equally defended by each: but let men say what they please, we will confute them by our conduct; as Diogenes baffled the sophist, who denied that there was any such thing as motion: the philosopher listened to a tedious discourse, and then contented himself only with walking carelessly about before him. What opinion should we form of
that

that man's prudence, who in building a house which he was to inhabit the whole year, only had a view to the intense heat of the dog-days, without considering how few these are in proportion to the rest of the year, when the whole face of nature is changed ; producing such tempestuous weather of various kinds, solstitial rains and equinoctial hurricanes, as demand the strictest attention to prevent the fatal effects of their depredations ? We should certainly reckon his conduct very absurd ; and equally so must the conduct of that woman be, who, forgetful of approaching age, decline of beauty, and the various vicissitudes we are liable to meet with through the different stages of life, cultivates herself only for that short period, when her beauty excites admiration ; leaving her mind unprepared for encoun-

tering the inroads of time, the mortifying disappointments incident to maturity, and the various indispositions, &c. attending on old age. To a mind well informed, no state will appear as a real evil, into which we are conducted by the common and regular course of nature: but those who have no internal source of happiness, will find themselves uneasy in all the stages of life; every *one* of which is marked out by certain and defined limits, except the last; old age *alone* has no determinate boundary. We should take care to prepare ourselves to act with propriety, in each of these periods. To form a character as perfect as our nature admits of, a woman must adapt herself to the different situations and seasons of human life; each of which has its proper and distinguishing characteristic; and she should gradually disclose

disclose her acquired perfections as years increase, without blending the playfulness of infancy with her youthful studies, or the simplicity of youth with the corrected reason of middle life, or the amusements of that period with the avocations respectable in old age. And as every stage of life hath its proper train of thoughts, and some peculiar biases, let it be our care to cultivate the former, and correct the latter, directing all our studies, and endeavours, to make ourselves useful, and easy, in this world, and happy in the next. Infancy and youth, middle life and old age, have each of them their peculiar and appropriated pursuits; as youth does not regret the toys of infancy: or middle-life, that it has no longer a taste for the amusements of youth; so also those objects that are suitable in middle life,

must be exchanged for others in old age. When Servius Tullius classed the Roman people, he divided their ages into three periods, limiting childhood to the age of seventeen, youth to forty-six, and old age from thence to the end of life*. As this discrimination was made principally with a view to the men, I would class women's ages as follows: I would limit infancy to fifteen, youth to thirty, middle life to fifty, and old age from thence to the end of life. And I would recommend it particularly to women to keep these dates constantly in their remembrance: the principles of our dissolution are derived to us with our existence, they are essential to our nature; our decays keep pace with time, which measures our transitory life:

* Aul. Gel. lib. x, cap. 18.

every moment subtracts from our duration on earth as much as it adds to it. In the advancing years of life the vessels, from their continued action on the fluids, begin to *contract*, and in the length of time, *wrinkles* must furrow the finest face; yet, from the manner of our education, it is a melancholy truth, the generality of us can bear any thing easier than the thoughts of approaching age. Whence, good sir, proceeds this glaring defect in our sex? Is it not from a knowledge that contempt, for the most part, succeeds the adoration which was paid them in their youth? And since, from an erroneous education, their minds are not sufficiently strengthened to despise the men for degrading their sex, so much by considering them only as objects of sight, their next resource is to put off the evil day as long as possible; as if they could

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controul time itself, and it were equally at their command as paint and dress. Is a woman culpable in the eye of reason, because she was born before many others? The flowers of youth have their season, they blow and flourish, and in a few years are no more. The panacea, whatever its composition was, the transfusion of blood, and the other means that have been proposed for immortalizing or renewing in youth the body, are equally chimerical. In the life of man, as in the fruits of the earth, there is a certain point of maturity, beyond which the marks of decay must necessarily appear. To this unavoidable condition of her present being, every wise and good woman will submit with a contented and chearful acquiescence : as it will be impossible for her to conceive, that the first and supreme Spirit, whose creatures,

or

or whose emanations all other spirits are, will destroy a being that he has made capable of so much happiness as she has already tasted.

It was with the hopes of immortality, that Socrates warmed his doubtful spirits against the cold potion ; and Cato, before he dared give himself the fatal stroke, spent part of the night in reading Plato on the immortality of the soul. The duties of Religion, are many, but easy ; strict, but pleasant ; and have nothing terrible or forbidding in them. Convinced of this, a sensible woman will be in the pursuit of what wisdom and philosophy can yield : in consequence of which, she will be greatly reconciled to herself, and will find an ineffable satisfaction in the silent approbation of her amusements : whereas the remembrance of folly is irksome and pain-

ful ; but the pleasures and advantages, which flow from a well-ordered life, are intense, and permanent. The first years of our lives must make provision for the last : she who never accustoms herself to reflection, can never be wise ; perpetual levity must end in ignorance. Youth is the vernal season of life ; and the blossoms it then puts forth, are indications of those future fruits which are to be gathered in the succeeding periods : now the proper fruit to be gathered in the autumn of our days, is to be able to look back with self-approving satisfaction, on the happy produce of past years. To this comfort in old age, the accidental possession of beauty in youth, often proves an insurmountable obstacle, and is productive of the most baneful consequences. Sure of admiration, one young lady neglects securing the esteem
of

L E T T E R VIII. 89

of the world ; while another, less indebted to nature for her person, finding the necessity of acquiring agreeable talents, not unfrequently seduces from mere beauty its greatest and most valuable votaries. If we consider, the decline of beauty deprives us of the adoration of the men, it likewise delivers us from the tyranny of angry and contending passions, naturally produced by it ; and consequently from many inordinate and irrational desires, which might preclude our retiring within ourselves, and looking for happiness in our own bosoms. If we learn the art of entertaining ourselves alone, without being melancholy, we shall soon find other company not so necessary : and to these moral acquisitions, if we add that delicious aliment of the mind, which is gathered in the fields of knowledge, we shall
surely

surely obtain advantages *, superior to those possessed by the most celebrated beauties, surrounded by coxcombs, who strive to render them as contemptible as *themselves*. After perusing my letters, you will be sensible, sir, I have nowhere been for the women's departing from their own character; my intention being only to rectify your ideas of our sex: I did not mean to infringe the privileges of *yours*; this would be to subvert society—I have aimed only at giving *it* a true lustre, by shewing that the modesty, meekness, humility, and reserve, which are such necessary ingredients in a complete female character,

* It was by these means that the Duchess of *Valentinois*, kept her ground for three reigns. And mademoiselle, de *Virtue, Tencen*, were able to elude the disgusts of old age. An agreeable cultivated understanding never grows old.

are

L E T T E R VIII. 91

are no arguments of women's wanting sense, courage, conduct, and spirit, to act in a superior sphere, if occasion should call them to it. If I have said too much, I desire only to be judged by the standard of human nature: It may be observed that people where their profession is barely tolerated, are always more zealous than where it is established by law.

With best compliments to Lady Bruce, I remain,

dear Sir,

your humble Servant,

AMELIA FILMER.

L E T-

L E T T E R IX.

From the Same to the Same.

S I R,

AS I find you are not yet convinced by my arguments, I again take up my pen. You men declaim against our sex ; you magnify our real faults ; and search for, and create such as are merely imaginary. But our triumph arises from the efforts you make against it.

“ Envy does merit as its shade pursue ;
And as a shadow proves the substance true.”

I was unwilling to fatigue you by a recapitulation of many circumstances,
which

which you are much better acquainted with than myself; but I find it now necessary to refresh your memory, by a long and tedious narration of female worthies. An excellent writer observes, "Nothing should be esteemed as characteristic of a species, but what is to be found among the best and most perfect individuals of that species:" after which, if you continue to dispute our abilities, you must bid adieu to that natural rule of reasoning from analogy; must contradict that maxim of common sense, that men ought to form their judgments of things which are the objects of experience, from what has been experienced. Human nature has been invariably the same in all ages, however perverted by prejudice, custom, or superstition. There are, indeed, self-evident propositions, the truth of which,
like

like the sun at noon, strikes unobserved light upon the mind: to cavil or conjecture against these, would be to war with demonstration, and combat with truth and Heaven. The cause of virtue and our sex can hardly be separated; sorry I am, that in me they will find so weak a champion, being conscious, among the many arguments I shall produce of the superior talents of women, the visible deficiency of my own will appear a powerful argument against me. And did I not suspect you would consider my silence as a tacit confession of what you advanced, I should have quitted the subject, as conscious of my own incapacity of doing it justice. Women, though consigned by nature to private virtues and domestic excellence, have undoubtedly been found, upon urgent occasions, to adventure in bold and heroic

roic acts, especially when roused to the exertion of masculine deeds by sensibility and a virtuous feeling. There are extremities, in which the human soul spurns all the weaknesses of nature, and towers above them by her native vigour; with an energy and enthusiasm of action, which perhaps might well be adduced as one intimation that we have a divine and immortal spark within us. Women are certainly not inferior to men in resolution, and perhaps much less in courage than is commonly imagined: the reason they appear so is, because women affect to be *more* afraid than they really are, and men pretend to be *less*. Lord Rochester asserts all men would show fear if they dared. Women have been known even to sacrifice their own lives for the safety of a husband, a brother, or a son: fearful and weak

as they are, they often behave more courageously than the other sex, under pains, sickness, want, and even the terrors of death. Many men have been brave from principle who were timid by nature : and why should the like spirit be so partially denied to women ? There are men as void of courage as the most heartless of our sex. What is it that renders women more hypocondriac and vapourish than men ? Their sedentary life and want of exercise. These Macaroni gentlemen that live like them, are subject to the same disorders : are there not many of these ambiguous beings, more effeminate than the most timid woman ?

“ Throw but a stone, the giant dies.”

These gentlemen are perfectly intelligent, in the laws of their *club* ; the constitution, history, and genealogy, of their
horses

horses; and the privileges conferred by the game-act. But as for more useful studies, they bequeath them to the *dull men of sense and reason*. A man who can be engrossed with such trifles, has generally no great understanding; and the weakness of those intellects, which renders him delighted with folly, naturally exposes him to the allurements of vice. Incapable of judging between an error and a crime, he is seldom honourable, and never honest: a stranger to the proper means of promoting his own happiness, he is not fit to be trusted with that of another; and being by nature vicious, habit makes him despicable, and, as the poet finely says,

Th' affections of his mind are dark as night, and
dull as Erebus.

—Let no such man be trusted.

Women, at this time, really should be pardoned, if they usurp the management of the most important affairs, since so many of the men have usurped the government of the looking-glass and the toilette. Men become weaker than women, when educated in sloth and softness; whereas women that are brought up hardily, are often more robust than men. Active people were in such repute among the Greeks, that Homer, always judicious in his epithets, never mentions the illustrious Achilles, without adding, *swift-footed*; and it was not the least among the emperor Trajan's merits, that he had marched on foot to the farthest boundaries of the empire. When Cyrus was exasperated against the Lydians for revolting, Cræsus, their former king, gave him the following sagacious advice. " Oh ! Cyrus, destroy
not

not Sardis, an ancient city, famous for arts and arms; encourage luxury, and you will soon see, O king! that instead of men, they will become women." Diodorus Siculus, says of the Scythians, "That the *women* were trained up to war as the *men*, to whom they were not inferior in courage or strength." If proper exercise can invigorate the *weak*, inactivity must debilitate the *strong*. It was carefully observed among the Romans in their exercises, that the arms destined to the imitation of war, should be of double the weight to what was required in real action. Mr. Locke insists on a hardy education, as improving the faculties of the mind by invigorating the body. If we regulate our conduct by the dictates of human reason, why is not a woman capable of enduring hardships as well as a man,

since of women, as well as men, human nature is the mother? It is not nature which condemns women to a retired, idle way of life, but the abuses of the world, not to say the tyrannic power of the men, who will not divide their authority with us. Give to a woman the education of a man, and she also will be able to make a glorious figure in the world. To a willing mind nothing is difficult: human life being a mixture of good and evil, it is not enough to have spirit to enterprize every thing, but we must also have courage to suffer every thing. The conduct of life is the great business of a rational mind: and the dignity and propriety of that conduct are what mark true superiority. The power of wisdom is a poor thing, if it is not employed. It is vain to triumph in the possession of what we do not use.



use. Misers may as well boast of their feasts, as men of genius of their lucid intervals. Women of moderate capacities may plead that occasion calls them to the performance of tasks to which they are unequal; but it is a dismal reflection, that where nature has made women fit for all things, they by their own faults make wide chasms in life, in which they are fit for nothing, or at least fit only to be exposed for the example of others. Feminine weakness did not prove an obstacle to the achievements of the Amazons in Scythia, of Camilla in Italy, the maid of Orleans in France, or Boadicea in England: on the contrary, these celebrated women persevered in their tracks of glory, with unremitted resolution, to the last period of their lives. When the Sicambri, a Gallic tribe, began to

retire from the field of battle; their women met them, and uncovered their bosoms, saying, "Strike here, ye cowards! we wish that you would slay us, rather than expose us to the disgrace attendant on slavery." This behaviour, these reproaches, raised the courage of the Sicambri, and alarmed their pride: they rallied, returned to the charge, repulsed and entirely defeated the enemy, who had supposed themselves in possession of the victory. The duke of Burgundy, who was continually at war with Lewis II. having laid siege to Beauvois; as soon as his artillery had made a sufficient breach to attempt the assault, he immediately ordered it to be made: the besieged having sustained it for three hours with great gallantry, began to lose courage, when the women ran to their assistance, some armed with pikes,

pikes, others with sticks pointed with iron : all engaged in the combat, and all exposed themselves with intrepidity : the Burgundians were repulsed, and some days after raised the siege. In commemoration of this action, an annual procession was instituted on the twelfth day of July, where the women had the precedence of the men. When Philip, the son of Demetrius, laid siege to Chio, they were obliged to capitulate, and to march out of the city, only in their shirt and doublet. When the women heard of these shameful conditions, they let loose their resentments, shewing them how reproachful it was to leave their arms behind them, and to march like naked men through their enemy. When the men to appease them, told them that this was according to their agreement—they answered, take your shield

and lance, and leave your clothes, and tell the enemy these are the clothes you wear. And thus by the advice of their wives, they escaped the shame which they had prepared for themselves.

Tacitus speaking of the French, says, that they heard the shouts of their wives from the field of battle ; that they wished them of all others to be the witnesses and panegyrist of their actions : that they had sometimes prevented the rout of their enemies, and rallied the troops by their exhortation, and remonstrances. These nations dreaded captivity more on account of their women than themselves ; and the Romans availing themselves of this apprehension, often demanded their noblest virgins for hostages. Cæsar acquaints us the Parisians were one of those states that composed the republic of Gaul, and which only formed a single nation,

nation, though independent of each other. Each of these people had their peculiar laws, chiefs, and magistrates: and appointed every year deputies to the general assemblies; which were usually held in the college of the Druids, in the middle of a forest in the county of Chartrain. The administration of civil and political affairs had, for a considerable time, been entrusted to a senate of women, elected by the different cantons. They deliberated on peace and war, and decided the differences which arose among the Virgobreti*, or that took place betwixt one city and another. Plutarch informs us, that by one of the articles between Hannibal and the Gauls, it was stipulated, “ That if any Gaul had reason to complain of a Carthaginian, he must appear before the senate of Carthage, established

* Sovereign or chief magistrate.

in Spain. If any Carthaginian finds himself injured by a Gaul, the affair must be decided by the supreme council of Gallic Women." The Druids, discontented with some decrees of this tribunal, so artfully employed the influence which religious superstition gave them over the minds of men, that they caused it to be abolished, and created one of their own in its stead. Few people are judges of sense and reason, but every one can see grimace, and feel enthusiasm, both of which were artfully employed on this occasion. The Druids obtained the same pre-eminence as the women had, and they availed themselves of it to appear the first body of the state. It is to be observed, that the Gauls under the government of the women, had taken Rome, and kept Italy in constant terror, and under that of the priests, they

they were themselves subdued by the Romans. And that Cæsar owed his conquests to the jealousies and divisions which a Druid, the perfidious Divitiacus, incessantly sowed amongst the people.

The women were also invested with the management of public affairs among the Sitones, or Norwegians. If wisdom proceeds from a clear apprehension, distinct judgment, and cool deliberation, why should women be excluded from state affairs? It is not by corporeal strength and activity that momentous affairs are conducted; but by prudent and sage counsel, and that authoritative influence which ever attends on public esteem. The celebrated general of the Grecian forces never wishes for ten Ajaxes, but for ten such officers as Nestor, to be secure of soon laying the walls of Troy level with the ground. The greatest

est of the Roman princes, Numa, Trajan, Hadrian, and the Antonines, ascended the throne in a very advanced age—when the mind, not the body was the object of the senate in their election of them. They expected no more than that they should guide by their wisdom, the valour of the legions. So sensible were the Romans of the imperfection of valour without skill and practice, that in their language the name of an *army*, was borrowed from the word which signified *exercise*. Designs are ~~are~~ not always certain to succeed by force ; but if at all practicable, never miscarry when prudence and good counsel are made use of. The Romans also held Fabius Maximus in much greater esteem than Marcellus, calling Marcellus the sword of the commonwealth, and Fabius the shield, one being
fit

fit to *acquire*, the other to *preserve*: but the preservation of the state being of most consequence, they had much more veneration for the *wisdom* and *prudence* of the one, than the *valour* and *courage* of the other. The author of the Political Aphorisms, says, “ Women in the greatest emergencies, and most eminent perils, are never at a loss to find a remedy, or to hit on some expedient; nay their counsels are the best resources: for such is the natural genius of that sex, that in impending dangers, their very first impulses of soul are greatly excellent and happy. In the establishment of the Chinese empire, the ministers are divided into two classes, that of the Thinkers, and that of the Expeditors; these last are charged with the detail and dispatch of business, and answer to our common statesmen: the Thinkers, on the contrary,

have

have no other occupation than to form projects, or examine those that are offered to them. " This is, says an ingenious writer, the source of the many singular institutions, which strike us only with a cold admiration, and which might prove the happiness of a nation that would imitate them."

I cannot help thinking, had women been employed in the latter capacity in Great Britain, it would have been no loss to the nation on many occasions.

It is to be feared, we have many ministers who press forward into office, without having learned this *art* of thinking. And they mistake the petulance, which can give inspiration to smart sarcasms on an obnoxious measure in a popular assembly, for the ability which is to ballance the interest of kingdoms, and investigate the sources of national

tional superiority. Abilities alone are not sufficient to entitle a representative to a seat in parliament : his constituents ought to pay a particular regard to his morals : it will be of little service to them, that he is *clear* in his *understanding*, unless he is *untainted* in his *integrity* ; on the contrary, talents without virtue, will only furnish him with the means of doing more detriment to society. With the administration of such men, the people can never be satisfied ; for besides, that their confidence is gained only by the view of superior talents, there needs that depth of knowledge which is not only acquainted with the just extent of power, but which can also discover a proper expedient to preserve those at the helm of affairs from the contempt that attends irresolution, or the resentment that follows

lows

lows temerity. The author of the Guardian says. "Women of quality should apply themselves to letters, because their husbands are generally strangers to them, and it is a great pity that there should be no knowledge in the family." But I am serious in advancing, that had certain honourable gentlemen consulted their wives on speeches they were to make in the house, it is probable that the *one* would not have talked of the island of Pennsylvania, nor the *other* of the continent of Newfoundland; nor would the ministry have been in a panic the war before last, when a wag sent intimation to them, that the French fleet were landed at Arthur-seat, near Edinburgh; and that Broughty-castle was besieged. You may remember Cervantes makes the princess of Micomicon (in his Don Quixote) land at Offuna, though it is
not

a sea port ! by which he introduced a fine piece of satire on an eminent Spanish historian of his time, who had described it as such. But to return from this digression ; the Scandinavian tribes were accompanied at their assemblies by venerable hoary-headed prophetesses, dressed in long linen vestments of a splendid white. Their matrons and daughters acquired great reverence from their skill in studying simples, and the knowledge of healing wounds. The wives frequently attended their husbands in the most perilous expeditions, and fought with great intrepidity in the most bloody engagements. The Goths, also believed some divine and prophetic quality to be inherent in women ; they regularly consulted them on the business of the state : and women were suffered to conduct the great events they predict-

ed, such as Velleda, in the Batavian war, who governed in the name of the deity, the fiercest nations of Germany.

Ganna, a prophetic virgin of the Marcomanni, a German or Gaulish tribe, was sent to Rome, and admitted into the presence of Domitian, to treat concerning terms of peace. Tacitus mentions another prophetess who held frequent conferences with the Roman generals ; and that on some occasions, on account of the sacredness of her person, she was at a great distance on a high tower, from whence, like an oracular divinity, she conveyed her answers by some chosen messenger. Several ages of antiquity have transmitted accounts of the Amazons of Caucasus, and of the Amazons of America, who have given their name to the greatest river in the world. The Bohemian matrons are said

to have made a short struggle for superiority: but instead of banishing the men, they condemned them to servile employments; and their constitution, left thus imperfect, was quickly (as it deserved to be) destroyed.

Fainting armies of Germans, have more than once been driven back upon the enemy by the generous despair of women, who dreaded death much less than servitude. If the day was irrecoverably lost, they well knew how to deliver themselves and children with their own hands from an insulting victor.

The mighty Ninus, founder of the Assyrian empire, at his death appointed his wife Semiramis regent of his vast dominions, during his son's minority, being sensible none had a greater genius for empire. She distinguished her government by the most renowned exploits

in war, by the wisdom of her administration, and by the most glorious works of peace : she built the matchless Babylon, besides other great emporiums on the banks of the Tygris and Euphrates. The next queen I shall mention is Zenobia, whose superior genius broke through the servile indolence imposed on her sex, by the climate and manners of Asia. She was esteemed the most lovely, as well as the greatest of her sex. Her manly understanding was strengthened and adorned by study.

She was not ignorant of the Latin tongue, but possessed in equal perfection the Greek, the Syriac, and the Egyptian languages. She had drawn up for her own use, an epitome of Oriental history, and familiarly compared the beauties of Homer and Plato, under the sanction of the sublime Longinus. She filled the
vacant

vacant throne of her husband, and governed with manly counsels, Palmyra, Syria, and the East, above five years. By the death of Odenathus, that authority was at an end, which the senate had granted him only as a personal distinction; but his martial widow disdaining both the senate and Gallunus, obliged one of the Roman generals, who was sent against her, to retreat into Europe, with the loss of his army and his reputation. The neighbouring states of Arabia, Armenia, and Persia dreaded her enmity, and solicited her alliance. To the dominions of Odenathus, which extended from the Euphrates, to the frontiers of Bithynia, his widow added the inheritance of her ancestors, the populous and fertile kingdom of Egypt. The emperor Claudius acknowledged her merit, and was content, that while

he pursued the Gothic war, she should assert the dignity of the empire of the East. She afterwards maintained her dignity in her misfortunes, and consoled herself with the loss of a throne, with the sweets of solitude, and the joys of reason.

Alexandra, the wife of Alexander king of the Jews, after the death of her husband, seeing the populace in arms, with the intent of murdering her two sons, to revenge the tyranny of their father; by her address and prudence mitigated their just resentments, and gained her sons the hearts of a people, which their father by a thousand injuries had embittered against them. What English monarch ever excelled our incomparable queen Elizabeth in the arts of ruling? Her glorious administration was one continued exercise of the most refined

refined politics. Another of our queens, Margaret of Anjou, wife of Henry VI. exerted her genius and activity in supporting, a long time, a feeble husband : she taught him to conquer ; she twice released him from prison ; and, after reducing his rebellious subjects, at last restored him to his throne. We have heard, in the war of 1741, of a princess admired even by her enemies who defended the German Empire with no less genius than courage.

I need not enumerate the names of other princesses who have distinguished themselves as sovereigns : they are inscribed in the barbarous annals of the times in which they lived, and have since been repeated by a number of panegyrists, particularly by Brantome, who wrote the lives of *illustrious women*. But as I would not imitate the French

Plutarch, who was a courtier, I shall not confine feminine excellence to *queens* and *princesses*, however partial I am to birth. As I am convinced you are heartily tired, I shall soon conclude, after asking you, whether king Erick would not have appeared to greater advantage, had he not immediately succeeded queen Margaret? And if it was not an infelicity to king James, that he succeeded queen Elizabeth?

The history of the empress Irene furnishes us with an instance of a reign which was as singular and remarkable, as her elevation to the throne was sudden and unexpected; born of an obscure, though not ignoble family, she could have no pretensions or expectation to mount the throne of the emperors of the East. Leon, the son of Constantine, no sooner saw her make her appearance at
Con-

Constantinople, than he became enamoured of her, and married her, with his father's approbation. After the death of her husband, she appeared with all the dignity and splendour of an empress, and manifested the most uncommon talents for political intrigue, and all the sinister arts of government.

There are few born to reign over provinces ; but we have every one an empire in our own hearts ; we have rebellious passions to subdue ; we have some noble sentiments to cherish and improve. It should therefore be the study of our sex, to learn in what manner to govern their passions, which are too apt to raise intestine commotions, and dethrone their natural sovereign, reason. And that we may do nothing which may occasion a dissension, let us not aim at imposing new laws : but, respecting our
first

first customs, persevere in virtue, in constancy, and fidelity : and we may then (you will allow, Sir) boast to have reigned with as much glory as the greatest monarchs. *Which that we may all do,* is the hearty prayer of, Sir.

your obedient,

humble servant,

AMELIA FILMER.

L E T T E R X.

From the Same, to the Same.

S I R,

I Make no apology for this intrusion ; you have brought it on yourself. I begin however to be afraid that the punishment exceeds the offence.

We

We find, in the writings of Plutarch, a piece entitled the *Virtuous Actions of Women*, “ One might (says the philosopher of Chæroneæ) make a comparison between Anacreon and Sappho; between Semiramis and Sesostris; between Tanaquil and Servius; between Brutus and Portia; the same talents and the same virtues are modified by the same circumstances, and by the persons: but the foundation is the same, though the colour and the surface (so to speak) are different.” The historian next proceeds to mention a great number of women of all ages, who have shewn a generous contempt for death. He instances the Phœnician women; who, before an engagement which threatened the destruction of their city, agreed to expire in the flames, if the battle should be lost; and crowned the woman with flowers
who

who first made that motion in council. He tells us of other women, who resisted despotism and oppression, who, as soon as the tyrant was slain, ran dancing before the conspirators, and crowned them with their own hands : of some, who gave liberty to their country : of several who exposed themselves to death, and to be loaded with chains, to save their captive husbands : and he takes particular notice of Camma, who poisoned herself at the altar, that she might poison the murderer of her husband, and who, turning to the assassin, said, “ Thee ! this instant I order, in place of a nuptial bed, to prepare thyself a tomb.”

To these great and generous qualities, Plutarch has joined the softer, and perhaps the more attractive virtues, as being more natural to the sex. In all the
cha-

characters we read of excellent women, there is not a more illustrious instance of filial piety, than in the story of Cimonus : who being cast into prison, and there adjudged to be starved to death ; his daughter Xantippe fed him through the iron gate with the milk of her own breasts. Plutarch has also left a piece in honour of the Spartan dames, “ where (Mr. Thomas acquaints us) he cites a variety of facts which demonstrates their courage and vigour of mind. Nature sacrificed to patriotism, honour ranked before affection, the name of citizen preferred before the name of mother, tears of joy shed over the body of a dead son pierced with wounds, the maternal hands armed against a son guilty of cowardice, the mandate of death conveyed to a son suspected of a crime, and even compassion regarded as a weakness.” He gives

us a singular instance of the intrepidity and fortitude of a Spartan woman, in a state of servitude (a prisoner, and sold as a slave) : the question was put to her, What knowest thou? “To be free,” she replied : and when her master commended what she deemed ignominious, she coolly said, “You are unworthy of me :” and resigned herself to death.

The wife and sister of Mithridates, expressed less fear of death, than Mithridates himself. Did not the wife of Asdrubal do the same ? and have you not heard that Armonica, the daughter of Hiero, the Syracusan, chose to perish in the same flames with her country ?

The wife of the governor of Berwick Castle, affords also an instance of female heroism : his two sons were in possession of the besiegers as hostages : who violating their honour, threatened

to

to hang them up instantly under the walls before his eyes, if he did not surrender. The father being shocked, and torn by contending passions, like Agamemnon in the Iphigena, who presents a lively picture of human nature, when doubly besieged : nature prevailed, he was on the point of complying with their request, when his wife animated him by saying, “ You may have other children ; your honour once lost can never be regained.” The two young warriors, in consequence of this advice, fell victims for the good of their country, and the preservation of a fortress, which at that time was a place of great importance for the Scotch to possess, as a barrier against the English. There is also a remarkable instance, in the history of Scotland, of a lady at Perth, who when assassins were attempting to
enter

enter the apartment of her sovereign, supplied the want of a bolt, to one of the gates of the house, with her delicate arm, which was instantly shattered in pieces.

Posterity has preserved the memory of the wife of Seneca, Pompeia Paulina, who protested to her husband she would not survive him a moment : their veins were opened at the same time ; but Nero sent people to prevent Paulina's death, by binding up her wounds. The paleness which ever after remained in her looks, (says an historian) was an honourable mark of her courage and fidelity. The wife of Pætus furnishes another example of this kind, who stabbed herself to encourage her desponding husband to follow her example ; it was most likely the shame of surviving, which influenced him—The poor man had no choice

choice left but to do as he was directed. The manner of their death has afforded Martial the subject of an elegant Epigram, which has been thus paraphrased.

When to her husband, Arria gave the sword,
Which from her chaste, her bleeding breast she drew.
She said, my Pætus, this I do not feel,
But oh ! the wound, that must be made by you !
She could no more, but on her Pætus still,
She fix'd her feeble, her expiring eyes :
And when she saw him raise the pointed steel, she
 sunk—
And seemed to say, “ Now Arria dies ! ”

Nothing however but the barbarous age those people lived in, and their ignorance and superstition, could excuse self-destruction. But those were times when the extravagance of human nature was such, as led them to deify the most horrid vices ; as they had not yet learned the secret of our modern adepts

in iniquity—To keep vice in countenance, by bidding defiance to Heaven itself, and treading religion under foot.

We find that courage has always been in both sexes most evidently displayed under the banners of enthusiasm. I observed in Mezeray, under the article Croisade, preached by St. Bernard, in the year 1157, that he says, “Several women did not content themselves with taking the cross, but they also took up arms to defend it, and composed squadrons of females.”

I cannot help remarking, that religious wars are never mentioned, either among the Assyrians, Medes, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Gauls, Germans, or any other ancient nations. Such a solecism in religion was reserved for christianity : but how is it possible, that such inhumanity
should

should have taken its rise among the professors of a religion which so strongly recommends benevolence and charity ? But where am I running !—It must be confessed that my digressions are *not* a little *Pindaric*. Some Hebrew doctors, from the different names of *Adam* and *Eve*, drew arguments to prove the dignity and perfection of the female sex in that *Adam* signifies Earth, but *Eve* expresses life. And they affirm, that every name which God imposed on any thing, describes its nature and quality. Mr. Thomas acquaints us, “ That during the time of the Crusades, women, animated by the double enthusiasm of religion and of valour, often performed the most gallant exploits, and died with arms in their hands: this warlike disposition in them continued for near four hundred years, and in consequence of the prevailing passion, wo-

men quitted the soft and tender inclinations of their own sex, for the toilsome occupations of the other. But there were æras, and countries, in which that spirit appeared with peculiar lustre; as during the fifteenth and sixteenth Centuries, in the Archipelago, and Mediterranean, where they were invaded by the Turks. Every thing conspired to animate the women of these countries with an exalted courage; the prevailing spirit of the foregoing ages, the terror which the name of the Turks inspired, the difference of religion, which produced a kind of sacred horror, the striking difference of manners, and above all the confinement of the female sex, which presented to the women of Europe, nothing but the dreadful ideas of servitude and a master, the tears of beauty in the embrace of a barbarian, and the double tyranny of love and pride."

Women surely could not then be justly accused, because they forsook the more domestic duties, when they were called upon by the motives of religion and honour, to defend their country : which are the principles that have generally given birth to the greatest actions of women.

Rome owed its greatness as much to the women as to the men. After the siege of Troy, the Trojans who survived the ruin of it, were dispersed into several parts of the world. Some of them, after many storms, were driven on the coast of Italy, where the Tyber emptied itself into the sea. On their landing, they began to seek for provisions round the neighbouring coasts. The women who remained on board, heartily tired of a long and dangerous navigation, agreed to set fire to their ships, and she

who first proposed it, was called Rome. The Sabine women also contributed as much to the increase of it, as the Trojans did to its rise. I could mention a thousand instances where the women were beneficial to Rome. I shall only tell you why formerly a temple was erected to Venus Armata, and another to Venus Calva. When the exigencies of state required it, women redeemed their country, with the only ornaments they had, a little gold in their ears, and instead of dressing their hair, cut it off to make ropes for the defence of the Capitol.

I shall not have recourse to scripture, for fear of prophaning divine truths with foolish reasoning; neither shall I alledge the great numbers of women, who, for the name of Christ, have with an admirable constancy suffered themselves to be barbarously murdered by tyrants.

tyrants. Nor of those who by their learned disputes have confuted the professors of idolatry. In the second triumvirate, the *three assassins* who governed Rome, having exhausted every other method of plunder, resolved to tax the women, and imposed a heavy contribution on each of them : they sought an orator to defend their cause, but found none ; no man would reason against those who had the power of life and death. The daughter of the celebrated Hortensius, alone appeared : she revived the memory of her father's abilities, and supported with intrepidity her own cause and that of her sex : the rustians blushed, and revoked their orders. Hortensia had that day the honour of giving an example of courage to men, a pattern of eloquence to women, and a lesson of humanity to tyrants. Appian

has preserved her oration, which he says she pronounced with intrepidity, where men, bending under oppression, durst not raise their eyes, or open their mouths.

Nicostrata, the mother of Evander, first taught the Latins the use of letters. And at Verona, in the fifteenth century, Isotta Nogarolla acquired so great a reputation for her eloquence, that even *kings* submitted to listen, and as scholars to attend her.

Was not the glorious discovery of Cataline's conspiracy, which Cicero is so proud of, owing to a woman of the lowest rank ; and who for that reason may be said to be the occasion of all the good Cicero boasts he did the commonwealth of Rome ?

What must we think of Aspasia's abilities, who had Pericles for a lover, and
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Socrates for a disciple, who speaks of her in terms of veneration? Her superior qualities engaged the most considerable persons in Athens, not only to visit her, but to bring their wives to hear her lectures.

Cato's daughter made so great advances in philosophy, and virtue, that some authors make her a rival in glory to her father. Cicero esteemed Cornelia's works so much, that he called them the books of joy and pleasure; and she gave her own daughters so fine and extraordinary an education, that had not Cato, from a sentiment of jealousy, opposed it, Rome designed to have erected a statue to her memory.

Cicero also was intimately acquainted with a lady named Cerilla: he often, in his Epistles, recommends her taste for books and philosophy. This, their common

mon inclination, made him fond of her writings. He also speaks with honour of the Roman ladies, who, in his time, had the greatest taste for elegant learning and polite language. Therefore aiming to distinguish himself in the art of eloquence, he employed the intervals of his leisure in their company; and while he improved his knowledge by the lessons of Scævola the augur, he polished his language by associating with Lælia, his consort; whose conversation, according to his own testimony, was tinged with the elegance of her father Lælius, the most polished orator of the age.

“ After the declension of chivalry in Europe (says Mr. Thomas), when the universal thirst of knowledge drew the attention of all Europe to the study of languages, women began to assume a

new

new character; soon after we see them preach, unravel controversies—support opinions—fill the chairs of philosophy and law—harrangue in Latin before the Pope—read Hebrew, and write in Greek. Women of quality, and young girls, perfected in eloquence, with the sweetest features, and softest voice, pathetically exhorting the Holy Father and the Christian princes, to make war against the Turks.”

Need I send to Greece for the nine Sibyls, and nine lyric Poetesses, to add to my argument? Vossius, Midas, and Lilius Geraldus, inform the world of Megalosttrade, and the daughters of Stefichorus; of the three Theanos, one the wife of Pythagoras, who improved his school after his decease. Athenæus thought it an ornament to his works to quote the poetess Hadyle; and Diogenes Laertius

Laertius deemed it no disgrace to Plato to give him for company his fair disciples Læsthemia and Axiothea, besides the beautiful Hipparchia, whose life in particular he disdains not to write : in which he celebrates her, as equally excellent in dramatic poetry, ethics, and philosophy.

Dionysius Halicarnassæus, and Longinus, two of the ablest critics of their time, celebrate the merit of Sappho. Permit me only to add, in continuation of this subject, a few ladies of the present age : Signora Bassi, of Bologna, who was presented with a doctor's physical degree, and who gives public lectures; and Signora Agnese, so famed in the literary world for a treatise on Analyses; in consideration of which, besides panegyrics from all the learned bodies of Europe, a professorship of mathematics

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tics has been conferred on her, in the University of Bologna. Notwithstanding these honours, she was deaf to all entreaties of the learned, or her friends: she withdrew herself from the world, retired into a nunnery near Milan, and has sacrificed to christian humility all the enjoyments and honours which her acquaintance, and talents, would otherwise have obtained for her in the world: Lord Moleſworth, in his account of Denmark mentions the literary merit of the ladies; and declares, that Tycho Brache's ſiſter may contend with the famous poetesses of the ancients. The marchioness du Chatelet, explained Leibnitz, translated and wrote comments on Newton. She wrote also *physical instructions*, wherein the depth of her genius is apparent to every one who is able to understand her.

But

But our own country furnishes sufficient instances of the various perfections and talents of women. The three Seymours, sisters, nieces to a king, and daughters to a protector, all celebrated for their learning, and for their elegant Latin verses. The unfortunate Jane Grey, whose elevation to the throne was only a step to the scaffold. Ascham, in his School-master, relating the memorable visit he paid to her before her execution, takes notice that he found her reading the *Phædo*, Plato's Dialogue on the Immortality of the Soul, in Greek. The eldest daughter of Sir Thomas More, whose learning was only eclipsed by her virtues : she corresponded in Latin with the great Erasmus, who styled her the ornament of Britain : a lady whose filial piety must exact the admiration of the latest ages.

We

We behold in Scotland, Mary Queen of Scots, the most beautiful woman of her age, and one of the most learned : she spake six different languages ; composed elegant verses in French, and, when very young, delivered an oration in Latin before the court of France, to prove that the study of letters is consistent with the female character. Lady Pilkington is known to have been the real author of the Whole Duty of Man ; and of several other moral and divine treatises, written with so much temper, purity, piety, philosophy, and good sense, that she may be justly reckoned the glory of her sex, and an honour to human nature : what greatness of mind, and goodness of heart, must the person be possessed of, who could deny herself the honour of such works, lest the name of Woman should render them less serviceable to mankind !

The Duchefs of Newcastle was the first Englifh lady who attempted what is now called polite literature ; and has left us a variety of compositions in profe and verfe. But the prefent age fufficiently demonftrates to what our fex are equal : I fhall tranfcribe what the Reverend Dr. Birch fays of one of them *, in the Hif- tory of the Works of the Learned †. “ This lady, fays he, is a very extraor- dinary phænomenon in the republic of letters, and juftly to be ranked with the Cornelias, Sulpicias, and Hypatias of the ancients ; the Scharmans, and Daciers of the moderns. For to an un- common vivacity and delicacy of geni- us, and an accuracy of judgment wor- thy the matureft years, ſhe has added the knowledge of the ancient and mo- dern languages, at an age, when a

* Miſs Carter,

† For June 1739.

competent skill in any one of them, would be no inconsiderable distinction in a person of the other sex."

You say we are incapacitated from state affairs, because we quarrel with one another, and cannot keep a secret. If women quarrel about trifles, do we not also see men, and even those on whose nod whole kingdoms depend, *going together by the ears*, about matters of equal consequence with that disputed among the Lilliputians, viz. whether they should break their eggs at the great or small end ! As to our capacity of keeping a secret, if we may credit Plutarch, he informs us, that Læna of Athens, who was engaged in a conspiracy against Pisistratus, fearing lest the exquisite torture she was put to, might extort any discovery from her, bit her tongue off. The same author, in an-

other part of his works, has recorded the women's talent for secrecy, in those of Melita, of whom, though all were in conspiracy with their husbands, not one discovered the secret. Tacitus has perpetuated the memory of Epicharis, whom all the cruelties of Nero could not induce to betray any of the secrets she was privy to, in the conspiracy against him. If Homer commends Ulysses and Telemachus, for their steadiness in keeping a secret, he is no less eloquent in the praises of Penelope and Euecla, for the same virtue. Angerona was so famous for this virtue, that the Romans worshipped her for the goddess of silence ; in honour of whom, the Athenians placed before the gate of the castle, a brazen lionsess without a tongue ! to denote thereby the command she had over her's, for she was not terrified by

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by the death of two great men her friends, nor, by all the engines of pain, could be compelled to reveal any one of the conspirators.

St. Jerome, who was a philosopher as well as an orator, and a father of the church, had so much esteem for women, that he dedicated many of his works to them. This would have been absurd, if he had not thought them competent judges.

The ancient philosophers also ascribed all sciences to the Muses, all sweetness and morality to the Graces, and prophetic inspiration to the Sibyls.

I have insisted particularly on the above head, because if you suppose women are incapable of keeping a secret—I look upon it to be indirectly insinuating, that there is no kind of imperfection, whereof they are not capable. I shall

now, fir, give you the origin of the Sallie law, as it is both whimsical and ridiculous. But I cannot omit first taking notice of the want of candour in a noble author, (now deceased) who, in his History of Henry II. mentions the inveterate prejudices which the English in those days, entertained against the idea of a female succession. "In all the history, says he, of the Anglo-Saxons, since the first day of their settling in Britain, there is but one instance of a lady's being allowed to succeed to the crown, viz. Sexburge the wife of Cenwalch, king of the West-Saxons: she reigned but a year; and Matthew of Westminster says, "She was expelled with disdain by the nobles, who would not fight under a woman." William of Malmesbury however gives a very different account of Sexburge; but his Lordship endeavours to obviate this,
by

by acquainting us, this author may have avoided publishing a fact, which was so unfavourable to the cause of the empress Matilda, in a book which he dedicated to her brother the Earl of Gloucester." His Lordship omitted telling us, that this queen retired to a house of devotion, and there died. We have in the history of the same kingdom, an instance of Ethelburga, the wife of Ina, who, in her husband's absence, headed an army against Eadbert, a pretender to his crown, took and demolished his castle of Taunton, and obliged him to depart out of that kingdom. His Lordship has mentioned Elfleda, whom he allows some writers call queen of the Mercians, but without remarking that her military exploits equalled those of the greatest warriors of that age. Plato, who was no great friend to women, will

have them to take the care of towns, and the men to be employed in all the offices of war.

When the succession of the French monarchy fell to a woman, after the death of Lewis X. his brother Philip earl of Poitou, the first prince of the blood, who pretended to be preferred before the king's daughter, had gained over to his interest the greatest preacher of his time, who was bishop of Amiens. This prelate, preaching before those who were to decide this controversy, took for the text, "The lilies neither toil nor spin:" these being the arms of France, he most learnedly proved, and you may suppose, sir, by what strong arguments, that God having declared the lilies did not spin, they could, not without sin, give the crown to the distaff. And thus it was adjudged
to

to the king's brother, in prejudice to the king's daughter. Permit me only to add before I conclude, that we generally see women give the decisive stroke to great affairs; and in spite of all the faults of which they are accused, at all courts, and at all times, the ladies are the principal movers of great events.

St. Evremont says, "The wise courtier takes care to have none of them for his enemy, nor even to speak against them in general." Is not this a prudent caution? Can our influence be denied, when it is considered we were too strong for the *first*, the *strongest*, and the *wisest* man that ever was! I fancy you would be very glad if some other amusement had at present employed,

Sir, your obedient,

humble servant,

AMELIA FILMER.

Continuation of the Family Narrative.

L E T T E R X I.

From the Duchefs de CRUI, to Mrs.
PIERPONT.

DEAR MADAM,

THE Lady F——s were kept three years at school, during which time they had been instructed in every thing fuitable to their rank and genius : at this time Lady Filmer brought Lady Sophia home, as she could not remain longer there, with propriety, on account of her advanced age. She would have been happy to have taken Lady Harriet from school at the same time, but was not over-fond of her associating much with

with her sister, until her reason was more confirmed, and her judgment strengthened. She soon found the care of Lady Sophia alone, a very difficult task : it was very hard to restrain her vivacity, or to give her just ideas of the world. She often said to Mrs. Ross (an amiable woman, who had lived with her several years); that she could have no sympathy with Lady Sophia? “ Our natures, said she, are not the same : my organs are incapable to convey my sentiments to her apprehensions, nor can I frame a language that is intelligible to her’s.” This may be easily understood, if we recollect that the greatest part of mankind, especially the illiterate, are always guided more by their external senses, than by their minds and understandings ; and therefore more easily comprehend sing’e objects and examples,

ples, than abstract propositions, syllogisms, and refined reasonings. Lady Filmer's literary merit has already been mentioned—She soon discovered that with Lady Sophia she must greatly descend in her style to be understood, and to descend so very far, was no very easy matter for her Ladyship : but the goodness of her heart made every sacrifice easy to herself, by which she could be of any service to others ; she therefore endeavoured to clothe her words in the simplest garb : she reminded her of the tender sollicitude she had always shewn for her—which attention, on her part, could only proceed from affection.

“ I am now (said she), Lady Sophia, to introduce you into the world. It is of the utmost consequence to order the first steps you take *in it*, that they may afford room for favourable
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conjectures on your future conduct. It is hard to remove early taken prejudices, whether of liking or dislike : people will *bunt* for reasons to confirm first impressions, in compliment to their own sagacity, nor is it every mind that has the ingenuity to confess itself mistaken, when it finds itself wrong."

As Lady Filmer thought it highly necessary to warn Lady Sophia of the dangerous influence of the more powerful passions, and by good principles to fortify her against their force ; and the more so, as she feared she had been accustomed in her early years to hear those irregularities which are the effects of strong passions, made too light of ; she instructed her, that the irregular indulgence of the passions brings infamy on those who are actuated by them. The terrible effects which they produce are
to

to be seen in history. “For,” said this excellent monitress, “Why do we read the transactions of past times? Why are we so fond of biography? Not surely as matters of mere amusement, but as containing facts, which, attended to, and properly digested, may serve to direct us in the conduct of our lives.”

In her reading, as she knew she would never apply much, she directed her to begin with what was most pleasing, and to ascend gradually from pleasure to utility. Lady Filmer also, told her, that it was proper she should make herself perfect mistress of the four principal rules of arithmetic; and she looked upon it as absolutely necessary, she should learn to spell her own language accurately: at the same time she did not altogether expect this, as in that case Lady Sophia must have understood the

the derivation, as well as the sense of the words she used, if she stopt not at sound. She told her she was far from wishing to debar her from recreations ; but only wished to have that medium observed, which preserves to the sex their dignity, without abridging them of their due entertainment. Diversions, when properly regulated, are highly necessary ; and never hurtful, but when taken to excess, that is to say, when they engross the whole thoughts. Balsac, speaking of those who are enemies to amusements, says, “ Had these people the government of the world, they would deprive the year of spring, and life of youth.” But to know how to employ our leisure hours, is necessary at every age of life : in youth it is a preservative ; in age it is a resource ; and it is œconomical at all times. Dionysius

sius being asked by one, who desired to speak with him, if he were at leisure ? made answer, “ Heavens forbid that I should ever be so unfortunate.” Leisure corrupts mankind—hence some believe, the pyramids in *Ægypt* were built to keep people employed—is it not useful for every one to be enured to toil ?

It was a maxim of Lady Filmer’s, never to conceal from young women, they were handsome, for she said they would soon be told so by the men ; and by being prepared for this compliment, they will receive it with indifference as words of course, instead of becoming a prey to the first coxcomb they meet ; she (said Lady Filmer) who is puffed up by the praises of men, on the supposed advantages of person, assists their designs upon her, and seems to own she thinks it a principal end of her being,
to

to be admired by them : and what can give *more* importance to them, and *less* to herself, than this ?—Those who require nothing more than beauty, must have been greatly charmed with Lady Sophia : but to those who investigate a little farther, her conversation was trifling, and her conduct unfeeling : she attracted hundreds by the allurements of her person, but before any of those whom she attracted had been an hour in her company, she repelled them so effectually, that they were ever after proof against her magnetic powers. As Mrs. Ross will make a considerable figure in the continuation of the *family narrative*, I shall in this place give you the out-lines of her history.

She had seen a great deal of the world ; her adventures my pen cannot do justice to ; they are of an interesting nature,
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some of them are pathetic ; *all* are full of that agonizing knowledge, which is usually purchased at the price of a broken heart. She had been extremely handsome, was at this time past forty ; but there was still a placidness in her looks, a mild serenity, which at once created respect and admiration. It is surely a kind disposition of Providence, that adversity, so baneful in itself, should conduce so peculiarly as it does, to the improvement of the human heart : it teaches modesty, humility, and compassion. “ Adversity, says Plutarch, sets greatness of soul in a just light.” It is in the extremes of fortune that men appear what they really are, and not in the tranquil course of common life. Her husband had been a man of an enterprising genius, though of good sense: had entered into great expences for the
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discovery of coal, which he was flattered was on his estate : these hopes insensibly engaged him more and more, expecting every day to be rewarded for his labours. In the mean time, the gentlemen in his neighbourhood having been great votaries to Bacchus, inlisted him under their banners ; and, his constitution being weak, he fell a sacrifice to his complaisance.

Men of strong health, and of a riotous turn, should not, in mere *compassion*, seduce into their company men of feeble constitutions, and make them companions of their riots, to the destruction of their health. And the same observation may be made in regard to extravagant men, of great and small fortunes, who are equally ill-suited, since the expences which will but shake the one, will quite demolish the other.

After the death of Mr. Ross, the estate was seized by his next neighbour, and greatest creditor; sold for little more than discharged his debts, leaving his widow and son only one thousand five hundred pounds. To complete Mrs. Ross's chagrin, the purchaser of the estate found the coal, before he had been in possession a fortnight. Although this afforded a proof to the relations of the family, that it had not been a chimerical scheme upon which Mr. Ross had expended his fortune, yet his memory was slighted, his son neglected, and his widow treated as a ridiculous enterprising woman, &c.—In this age, there is hardly a vice which riches will not dignify, or a virtue which poverty will not disgrace.

The errors of the happy and successful may be forgiven, those of the unfortunate

fortunate never are. No sex, no station, is exempted from the busy lash of tongues: whatever a man does, whatever he leaves undone, afford them matter to work upon. The best motives may be mistaken, or misrepresented: the most disinterested actions blamed and ridiculed. It is well that the happiness of mankind depends more upon the temper of their own minds, than upon the opinion of others. If we pretend, in all cases, to assign motives for the conduct of other people, we shall be frequently mistaken. If we attribute success in the world, in all, or even most cases, to uncommon merit, we shall contradict experience. The well-concerted project of a sensible man, must often depend for success upon the will of a fool. Mrs. Ross soon found herself slighted and contemned by her

great relations; they first insulted her with their pity, and then increased her fears, by magnifying the horrors of her situation, and their incapacity of relieving her. Evils can hardly happen to wise and virtuous men; or if they do happen, cannot render them miserable. Stones are hard, and cakes of ice are cold; and all who feel them, feel them alike: but the good or bad events which fortune brings upon us, are felt according to what qualities *we*, not *they*, have. They are in themselves indifferent and common accidents, and they acquire strength by nothing but our vice, or our weakness. Fortune can dispense neither felicity or infelicity, unless we co-operate with her. Few men who are unhappy under the want of an estate, would be happy in the possession of it. Mrs. Ross supported herself under these severe afflictions,

afflictions, with the greatest magnanimity : she still supposed, that her relations could not refuse her upon loan five hundred pounds, to recover an estate her son was intitled to ; and which sum, on the best advice, she was willing to risk ; but could not raise it herself until her son was of age, although she could give ample security for it. This small favour was denied her by Sir Benjamin Rofs, her brother-in-law. He wisely shaking his head, said, he had already seen the inefficacy of her projects, and her late husband's ; and every one must be sensible they had played at *ducks and drakes* with their money. That he was of the opinion of Richelieu, who had struck UNFORTUNATE out of his dictionary, affirming that every one succeeded *well* or *ill*, according as his conduct was *right* or *wrong*.

A much smaller indignity was sufficient to awaken a generous mind to a sense of its independence. Those have little sense of their own dignity, or rather can have no dignity at all, who stoop for favours, or pay attendance in expectation of them, when by economy or industry they can maintain their independence, and by that means rank with the greatest. Mrs. Ross acquainted Sir Benjamin, she had done justice to her son by trying every means of serving him; that she had not come there to ask charity of him, far less to hear her deceased husband's memory traduced; but had put it in his power to serve the only child of a brother who never offended him: and that by the favour she had asked, he would have run no risk. This she pronounced with great spirit: as some poisonous animals
carry

carry about them an antidote to their own venom, so do most people for the offence they give, by slight, hatred, or contempt. She was leaving the room when Sir Benjamin stopped her, saying, "If a trifling sum can be of any use to you, it shall be at your service." To this generous offer she made no reply, but *with a look*; the meaning of which was lost on this *event-judging fool*. It expressed—*I will not be obliged!* it marked the distinction between *sensibility* of *misfortune*, and *weakness* of *mind*: it repressed the insolence of wealth, and conferred dignity even on indigence. Mrs. Ross made some other unsuccessful attempts, to serve her son.

What is called *friendship* is so little to be depended on, that the surest way to preserve one's *friends*, is never to put them to any trial. Indeed some of the younger

part of her acquaintance at this time contributed to her enjoyment, as far as their civilities could extend: but it was with an ardour, which those that know the human heart, must be sensible could not last long. All that is *more* than *necessary* is *too much*: her case, her happiness, her welfare, was their only concern, they would go no where until they knew she was fixed for the day, &c. But every thing wears out, and the excess of their fine sentiments soon destroyed themselves: when her misfortunes grew familiar, they ceased to strike their imaginations: an habit of seeing her, dissipated the caprice which had been so beneficial to her, and satiated the satisfaction they had in serving her; they gradually declined in their visits and attentions, and at last wholly gave her up, from shame for the part
they

they had acted, which brought them in discredit with themselves. Mrs. Ross had been much attached to her husband: his temper had rendered him disagreeable for a few years past, but she imputed this to the bad success of his schemes, which had also led him into a love of the bottle. When we really love a person, we are apt to find excuses for their faults: but when they are lost to us, we wonder at ourselves for ever having been offended. Mr. Hume says, "nothing endears a friend so much as sorrow for his death." I am apt to believe (in too many instances in the present age) that the pleasure of a husband, or wife's company, has not so powerful an influence.

As soon as Mrs. Ross had reason to conclude she had buried every friend with her husband, or that they had been annexed to the deeds of the estate she had

had been obliged to sell, to prevent prescription, she had her son returned heir to his father; and, upon that *retour*, applied for a charter, in order to keep open his claim on the other estate, as it was not in her power to go to law. After which she would instantly have left Edinburgh, being greatly disgusted with her relation; but her son being at the university there, she would not withdraw him from it, and could not afford to board him elsewhere. This obstacle was soon removed; he disappeared, and wrote her a letter, that from knowing the difficulty of her situation, he reproached himself for having been so long a burthen to her, and had left her; that nothing should ever efface from his soul, the virtuous impressions she had given him; and that he despaired not of success in the world; for that as it was his strongest desire, so his
every

every endeavour should be exerted to snatch from indigence a respectable parent, and to place her in a situation worthy of her. I will not pretend to describe the emotions of her mind in reading this letter ; they only who are mothers, can perhaps judge of them. She had kept up a constant correspondence with Lady Filmer, and immediately wrote to her an account of her situation ; expressing a desire she might board in some sober family in her neighbourhood. The first natural impulse of a distressed heart, often points the best alleviation : she had an answer by return of the post, insisting on her instantly leaving a place where she had been treated unworthily, and coming to her. This kind invitation she accepted ; and was met at London, by Lady Filmer, who carried her to Filmer-Place. Mrs. Ross, in the beginning of
this

this narrative, had been with her Ladyship five years, and happy, though in a dependent state, as she knew her friend's sincerity; and that she was governed in her actions by such immutable principles, as made her never change her sentiments, being one of these fine dispositions, that are formed to draw their happiness from every object around them: her noble, and sublime self-love, relished nothing with more satisfaction than the being useful to her friends; and any person's boldness in requiring her services a second time, rewarded her first kindness. As a generous mind delights in conferring favours, so an ingenuous and grateful heart is superior to false shame in accepting them.

Mrs. Ross, however, felt great uneasiness on her son's account: having never heard from him. But Lady Filmer led her

her mind to such objects as alone could secure to her satisfaction. “ Could you, my dear Mrs. Ross, said she, flatter yourself with the hopes of finding this world the place of your repose ? awake from your error ! the happiest of mortals is he who has the fewest miseries, at least in human consideration ; religion, indeed, when it is truly prevalent, may have power to dissipate every cloud. What can befall us which is not foreseen, ordained, directed, by a wise and merciful Providence ? This, when you recollect, will be the origin of your peace, which will never be disturbed, but when you shall seek for consolation, and a remedy, in philosophy or human reason. There is nothing on earth, but the loss of virtue, which may *not* be lamented too much. Friendship, love, and duty have their bounds, and of

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consequence, the sorrow which is occasioned by each, should be limited.

With this excellent advice from Lady Filmer to Mrs. Ross; I conclude my letter. I ever am, dear Madam,

most affectionately yours,

ELIZA DE CRUI.

L E T T E R XII.

From the Same to the Same.

DEAR MADAM,

AS in my last, I acquainted you with the plan Lady Filmer adopted with Lady Sophia, I shall here acquaint you with that which she followed in the education

cation of Lady Harriet. She had received all the instructions of a boarding-school in common with her sister ; exclusive of which Lady Filmer, either personally or by letters, had instructed her in the sciences. She first explained to her chronology, and its technical terms ; she then wrote a short abstract of the Jewish History, from the creation of the world, to the destruction of Jerusalem : and then an account of the four ancient monarchies, from their origin, to the division of the Roman Empire ; and so on to the translation of the Imperial seat to Constantinople : to this she added a short account of the other Aborigines of the earth, such as the Celtes, Scythians, Chinese, Egyptians, Phœnicians, Carthaginians, Teutonics, and other nations of whom any account has been handed down to

us. She also wrote a short sketch of the middle ages under the Eastern and Western empires ; together with a history of the Caliphs, Saracens, and Mahometans, and their irruptions, &c. from the reign of Constantine to the restoration of the Western Empire, by Charles the Great ; and proceeded to the extinction of that family. She then gave her an account of the present state of the empires, kingdoms, and republics of the earth, and of all the alterations they have undergone ; and afterwards instructed her by the same means, in the history of the Germanic Empire : of Ecclesiastical History, &c. She divided the History of England into four periods, very different with regard to their duration, but almost of equal importance. The first is from the earliest

accounts of the country, to its conquest by the Saxons : the second, from that æra to that of the Norman Conquerors ; the third, from thence to the alteration of the constitution by the beheading of King Charles I. the last contains those transactions which have passed since that time. “ To consider the first with accuracy, she told her, belongs to the philosopher : the second and the third are more immediately the business of those who would understand the grounds of our constitution, which is the proper business of a legislator : the last, of such as would be acquainted with the connections and relations in which we stand with regard to our neighbours on the continent ; and our foreign and domestic trade : that is, in other words, of the politician and the merchant. She informed Lady Harriet, how the power

of England and France had been changed in a few centuries : that they had been then very different from what they are at present, as the French monarchs, under the reign of Hugh Capet, in 987, had but an inconsiderable tract of territory ; the greatest part of the kingdom being enjoyed by independent princes, whose possessions were gradually united to the crown. And though Henry II. conquered Ireland, Wales was not united to England till the reign of Edward I. nor was Scotland till that of James I. So that both kingdoms are (said to be) more powerful than ever *. The history of Scotland she also divided into four periods ; the first reaching from the origin of the monarchy to the reign of Kenneth II. the second from Kenneth's

* This sentiment however, is very justly disputed.

conquest of the Picts, to the death of Alexander III. the third extends to the death of James V. the last from thence to the accession of James VI. to the crown of England. The first period is the reign of pure fable and conjecture. Truth dawns in the second, but still merits no particular or laborious enquiry. In the third period, the history of Scotland becomes more authentic: not only are events related, but their courses and effects explained; the characters of the actors are displayed; the manners of the age described; the revolutions in the constitution pointed out: and here every Scotsman should begin to study the history of his own country. During the fourth period, the affairs of Scotland were so mingled with those of other nations, its situation in the political state of Europe was so important,

its influence on the operations of the neighbouring kingdoms was so visible, that its history becomes an object of attention to foreigners ; and, without some knowledge of the various and extraordinary revolutions which happened there, they cannot form a just notion either of the most illustrious events, or of the characters of the most distinguished personages in the sixteenth century. The history of Ireland she divided into three parts : the first begins with the establishment of the Scoto-Milesians in that kingdom, and extends to the fifth century, when the Irish first began to renounce the pagan idolatry ; the second begins at the rise of christianity, and comprehends seven centuries, ending about the year 1200 : the third contains the more circumstantial relations of the different irruptions of the English, their
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establishment on that island, and, in short, all the remarkable transactions that have happened, down to these times. Lady Filmer had taught Lady Harriet, the principles of geography, and the use of the different sorts of maps and charts, ancient and modern : she instructed her likewise in genealogy, in rhetoric : she pointed out to her the method of obtaining a correct style, but more particularly in the composing of English, French, and Italian letters. Words, she observed, ought to be placed in such a manner, as not to shock the ear with jarring sounds ; that she must be upon her guard against monosyllables ; must observe a reasonable limit in her periods, never exceeding the usual power of the breath, to utter with ease ; which may be about six of our heroic verses : that she must seldom let

two, never three, of this extent succeed each other : that she must avoid no less the contrary extreme, of short sentences, which are unmusical, harsh, and abrupt ; and cautioned her not to string many of these together ; for that discourse, or writing, is most agreeable to the ear, when long and short sentences are properly intermixed. She recommended particularly to Lady Harriet, the Etymological Dictionary of Monsieur Menage, as necessary for understanding the words and orthography of the French language. It were to be wished, there were dictionaries of this sort compiled for the different idioms of countries. It was probably with this view, a very ingenious author compiled a dictionary, without which it would have been impossible to unravel the beauties of his own works : which would otherwise have

have remained (to the loss of mankind) *torpid, frozen, and congealed.*

In the hours of relaxation, Lady Filmer made Lady Harriet read some of the best poets and orators, ancient and modern, to improve her taste: she also informed her of the nature of antiquities, medals, and other ornamental parts of learning, at least so far, that she might not be ignorant of them: and purchased for her Mr. Jennings's Introduction to the Knowledge of Medals, which is reckoned a sensible and judicious treatise; in which the elements of medallic knowledge are laid down without affectation, or any useless display of erudition: it contains the history of medals; their matter, size, and shape; the orders into which they are distinguished; their impression and form, and their values and use. The Tyro in an-

tiquitie may here find a valuable introduction to that province of knowledge which relates to medals and coins ; and the profound antiquary may learn to be more sparing of conjecture, and to form his ideas upon the principles of reason and common sense. Lady Filmer also used to amuse Lady Harriet with Dr. Stukeley's *Medallic History of Carausius*, emperor in Britain : the events in the seven years reign of Carausius, are there deduced from three hundred and ten coins of this emperor, in which is delineated their religious ceremonies, &c. He lays it down as a maxim, that every legend of a medal alluded to religion, sacrifices, public spectacles, sacred transactions, deities, the animals used for offerings ; and all those things are well illustrated in the Roman calendar annexed, which he is said to have

have much improved, by adding the days of triumph, and other particulars. “ A cabinet of medals, Lady Filmer told her, is a body of history, as confirming such passages as are true in old authors, in settling such as are told after different manners, and in reading such as have been omitted: they are also a great help to chronology, as they do not only show the actions of the emperor, but at the same time, mark out the year in which they were performed. It having been the wisdom of the greatest and most polite nations in the world, to deliver down to posterity the exploits of the greatest generals and statesmen of their times. The most common expedient was that of medals. Is it not to be regretted, that as no nation in Europe has, of late years,

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excelled our own, in the arts of peace and war, that they are not thus perpetuated? Mr. Bizot, tell us in his *Histoire Metallique*, that our neighbours the Dutch, though a rude unpolite people, have excelled us in this particular. Every great action by sea or land, every honourable peace which has been made by them for the good of their country, has added a coin to the cabinets of the curious.

But every thing, my dear child, said she, in its excess is ridiculous : I would not, observes an elegant writer, be better acquainted with the faces of the Antonines, than with those of our own kings ; and I would prefer my money in pounds sterling, to a sum in sesterces. But to possess a sentimental facility of being moved by what is excellent in any art,
and

and to be able to signify it to others, will surely add to the other graces an amiable woman may have.

Taste takes in a very large compass, it endues the mind with penetration, and exhibits to us at once, not only the exterior parts, but the very essence of things, without calling the reasoning faculties at all to our assistance.—In my opinion said she, taste results from a very delicate sensation of the heart, and a just turn of the mind. She who enjoys it, and cultivates a competent knowledge of the polite arts, may be said to possess another sense, and will therefore add to her own happiness; while it marks to others a superior education, an enlightened mind, and exquisite feelings. If a woman should not even have taste, as it is the gift of Heaven, it will by no means excuse her ignorance.

norance. Want of information proceeds from indolence and a vulgar mind *. As much of life must be passed in affairs considerable only by their frequent occurrences, and much of the pleasure our condition allows must be produced by giving elegance to trifles, it is necessary for us to acquire such accomplishments as are proper, in the intercourse of society, to render us interesting or pleasing companions. It is thought the Bona Dei of the Romans was nothing more than the goddess of Taste. Ladies alone were admitted into her mysteries: the natural indelicacy of the stronger sex seems to countenance this opinion. Women in general are allowed

* *Barnaroti*, wrote a series of comedies called *La Fiera*, or the Fair, by which he supplied the Academicians *della Crusca* with the terms of arts and manufactures. It may be necessary to know these, though we should be sparing in the use of them.

to have much stronger, and more exquisite sensations than men : and a frequent intercourse with the female sex, and a thorough acquaintance with their charms and virtues, are essential requisites to form a man of taste. A sensible woman, continued Lady Filmer, who has a taste in the sciences, will join such a happy propriety in the use of them, as will be sufficient to excite the admiration of others, even while she discreetly covers her knowledge with a gentle veil : and while she is adorned with all the graces of her sex, and can think deeply, *she will assume nothing*, having always a facility of temper, a presence of mind, and an ease of manner, which will make her deepest reasoning appear to be the result of nature. Let us, my dear child, said she, resign the mystery of technical terms to the men, by which their *ignorance*

rance is sometimes *disguised* and their *knowledge* frequently *disgraced*. There cannot be a greater abuse of language than to make use of words to which we have no fixed, no determinate ideas. I make it a rule never to give my assent or negative to a proposition, till I am acquainted with the terms of it. To simplify expression, is always the effect of the deepest knowledge, and clearest discernment. Let us also avoid all kinds of affectation: when once people quit the direction of nature, they know not where to stop, and continually expose themselves by the most absurd extremes. This arises from an ill-governed consciousness, which when we see creep into worthy minds, we sincerely lament. And it is to be regretted, the ambition of having superior sensibility and parts, dispose the affected lovers of arts to receive

ceive rapture at one time, and communicate it at another. They first impose upon *themselves*, and then on *others*.

A person of real taste possesses all his senses in the manner best adopted to receive the impression of every true pleasure, which Providence has scattered with a liberal hand for the delight of his creatures. There is nothing intrinsically beautiful, that does not furnish him with a perpetual delight : in a word, the avenues of his mind are open to all those enjoyments that bring with them the passports of reason. It is therefore to be lamented, that among those, to whom an easy fortune give sufficient leisure and opportunities for the improvement of taste, people of both sexes give so little attention to it, and consequently can find little amusement in it. Nature gives only the seeds of taste, culture must

must rear them, or they will never become a source of pleasure. When objects of any kind are first presented to the eye, or imagination, the sentiment Mr. Hume, says, which attends them, is obscure and confused : and the mind is, in a great measure, incapable of pronouncing concerning their merits or defects. But allow him to acquire experience in these objects, his feelings become more exact and nice ; he not only perceives the beauties and defects of each part, but marks the distinguishing species of each quality, and assigns its suitable praise or blame. To be continually advancing in the paths of knowledge is one of the most pleasing satisfactions of the human mind.

Lady Filmer, also, adopted a particular method with Lady Harriet, which contributed much to her improvement.

She

She used frequently to say, discouraging is like *transplanting* a *tree*, the success of which is precarious : but adages, resemble the *sowing* a *seed*, which strikes a surer and deeper root. In Lady Filmer's absence, Lady Harriet wrote to her twice a week, on various subjects ; by which she received a double advantage : it accustomed her to express her thoughts with propriety ; and by inquiring into the foundation of these maxims, whether it was reason or example, she discovered a great number of arguments, which induced her to follow that which is good, and to avoid that which is evil : and these arguments being the result of her own reflections, made the strongest impression on her mind, as she was convinced of the justness and truth of them. Lectures on morality, by the instructors of youth,

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are frequently regarded as part of their duty ; therefore make a weaker impression on their minds, than those which are the consequences of their own inquiry.

I am, my dear Mrs. Pierpont,
most affectionately
and truly yours,

ELIZA DE CRUI.

L E T T E R XIII.

From Mrs. PIERPONT to the Duchesse
DE CRUI.

DEAR MADAM,

Liege.

I Return your Highness many thanks
for the honour you have done me :
your confidence gives me importance
with myself. I was much entertained
with

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with Lady Filmer's letters, and also with your Highness's account of the different methods she pursued with the ladies F——: she appears to me to be a woman of extraordinary talents, and also very deserving of the high place she has in your esteem. The examples she produces of feminine excellence are, to be sure, very splendid, and I make no doubt of our capacities extending to any thing we are brought up for; but as in this happy period, we are protected and defended from invading enemies, we should cultivate those talents more natural to the sex.

Female courage, however it may be raised by fanaticism, or confirmed by habit, can only be a faint and imperfect imitation of the manly valour, that distinguishes the age or country, in which it may be found. But although

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there may be some marks of imperfection in women being naturally timid, yet it is owing to a cause worthy of praise: I mean the subtil and quick motion of the spirits which presently convey to the mind the images of external objects, and for that reason are easily put into disorder by them. We often see men, who neither fear death nor any thing else, but they cannot be called courageous, because they apprehend no danger.

Every thing to me, loses its charms when it is put out of that station wherein nature, or, to speak more properly, the all wise Creator, has placed it. A Plato in petticoats, or a Camilla in the field, are equally my aversion. Is it not inverting the order of nature; an actual rebellion against Heaven? In this town, the husband is Hercules with the distaff,
the

the wife Omphale with the lion's skin.
I remember a Spanish poet * says on
this subject.

If he who conquer'd lions,
Is by a woman conquer'd,
What shame for him to be so weak,
For her to be so fierce.

Whenever either man or woman,
deviates from what is more peculiar to
their own sex, and approaches in any
thing too near the other, they must be-
come less pleasing to one another. Aris-
totle, in his Politics, says, " The mo-
desty and fortitude of men, differ from
these virtues in women ; for the forti-
tude which becomes a woman, would
be cowardice in a man ; and the modesty
which becomes a man, would be
pertness in a woman." The fable of the
North-wind and the Sun contending to

* Lopez de Vega.

make the man throw off his cloak, affords an apt illustration of the powers of either sex: the blustering fierceness of the former, instead of producing the effect which it expected, made the man but wrap himself up the closer; yet no sooner did the sun-beams play, than that which before protected him, became an incumbrance. Mr. Pierpont used often to depreciate the character of women. Lord Chester, (but why do I mention him?) frequently answered him to this effect; "If we consider women in the light of our dearest friends, are we not to protect, honour, and caress them, with the utmost love and tenderness? but, if we regard them as enemies, they are a conquest of which a man ought to be ashamed."

I look upon sensibility of heart, sweetness of temper, and gentleness of manners,

ners, to be the most distinguishing characteristic in our sex : if we avail ourselves of these, we shall be more powerful than if we possessed the strength of Hercules, and the oratory of Demosthenes. Lady Filmer says, " That had women been employed in state affairs in Great Britain, it might have been lucky for the nation in some particulars." I cannot help, in some measure, subscribing to her ladyship's opinion ; for if women had been employed in the capacity of the Chinese Thinkers, we perhaps might never have been brought to such extremities in America, nor would so many brave men have fallen there in consequence of our misconduct at home. Courage may throw men into the midst of difficulties, but counsel and wisdom help them to wade through those difficulties, which cannot be ex-

pected rationally so much from men as women, as the former too often dethrone their reason by debauchery. I am a very bad politician, but as we have agreed to write to one another without reserve, to hazard every thing; I shall freely give you my opinion: perhaps you may say to me sometimes what an ingenious Frenchman said in a letter to a friend. “Il y a dans votre lettre une chose qui seroit, je crois fort belles, si nous l’entendions vous et moy.”—But I proceed—The ministry, of late years, do not seem to have been possessed of general ideas, or universal principles, and have acted in consequence of the most immediate, and familiar associations. They indeed, at least some of them, have had their own points in view, and have attended to them with the utmost diligence, and acted such a

part



part as is agreeable to that patriotism they have vowed to themselves, which is built on self-interest, and cemented by dissimulation. When this is the case, it naturally prevents their ideas from being complex. And this may account for their not having acquired a habit of comparing rapidly a number of objects together, and of forming a conclusion; by which means the action in consequence becomes less dangerous and uncertain.

Errors accumulated through many centuries, have never yet been exposed by ascending to general principles, nor has the force of acknowledged truths been ever opposed to the unbounded licentiousness of ill-directed power, which has so continually produced so many authorized examples of the most unfeeling barbarity. Such was the ex-
tirpation

tirpation of the poor Caribbees, an innocent and unoffending race ; living in a state of nature, hitherto unmolested, and unconscious of offence, never dreaming of impending woe. Their rights of inheritance had never been called in question : but had there been a surmise of that nature, every treaty of peace in which they were included was a new grant to them ; and a security on the faith of Great Britain. It has been urged they are a brutal, stupid people, addicted to all manner of vices : can we expect any thing else from a nation deprived of the Gospel ! Let us bewail, but not reproach them for their misfortune ; let us instruct them, and remove their errors, and not be so wicked as to reduce them to despair.

Each case is ours ; and for the human mind
'Tis monstrous not to feel for all mankind.

ARMSTRONG.

In this manner, I am very apt to believe, women would have acted if they had been at the helm of affairs; humanity belongs to the sex. An instance of this may be produced, by observing that in Russia during the reign of the late Empress Elizabeth, and the present Empress Catharine, no malefactor has been put to death. And it is more than probable, from the quickness of their genius, they would have penetrated into the sordid selfish views of those, who (for their own emolument) by their fallacious representations, induced the ministry (even in this age of œconomy) to expend thirty thousand pounds on this expedition, exclusive of the continued expence of keeping troops there. So far I agree with Lady Filmer; but her Ladyship says, * “ that the

• See Page 74.

organs in women are of a finer texture than in men." Might not this observation be made an argument for the contrary opinion of what she advances? Since the organs of the female sex are of a finer texture, and more exquisitely formed, than those in men; and since, as she has with great propriety observed, the soul is influenced in all her operations by the organisation of the body, will it not hence follow, that there must be some difference in the operations of the soul, and that women may have a higher degree of sensibility, more delicate feelings, more lively passions, and be more competent judges in matters of decorum and taste, which is, as Dr. Akenfide finely expresses it,

———feelingly alive

To each fine impulse, a discerning sense
Of decent and sublime, with quick disgust

From

From things deform'd, or disarrang'd, as gross
In species——

Will it not follow, that women, from the nicer construction of their organs, may thus be better judges of propriety, politeness, elegance, and taste, but may be less qualified for arduous undertakings, intricate and abstract reasonings, and the higher and more difficult departments of knowledge and science? Does not fact and experience favour this conjecture?

For contemplation he, and valour formed;
For softness she, and sweet attracting grace.

I must think, women ought to keep their distance from abstract sciences, and difficult researches, of which the study may overburthen their understanding, and blunt that subtlety and delicacy with which they excel.

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I cannot see myself, the necessity for our sex being philosophers, rhetoricians, historians, or poets. Our lives are too short for every attainment : if ignorance is despicable, a superfluity of false science is a thousand times worse, and often renders a woman contemptible and ridiculous.

If women's situation is more confined, is it not of infinite advantage to them ; does it not furnish them with more time to prepare themselves for everlasting happiness, which, it is to be much feared, the business of the world prevents the men from attending to ; and if the best of our services are imperfect, how much are they to be lamented ?

Look down, great God, with pity's softest eye,
On a poor breathing particle of dust,
His crimes forgive ; forgive his virtues too,
Those smaller faults, *half converts* to the right.

Night Thoughts.

Though

Though Solomon's description of a wife and good woman may be despised by this refined generation, yet certain it is, that the business of a family is the most profitable and honourable study a woman can employ herself in: and is such as will prevent her feeling that *ennui* attending fine ladies, as she will have no time for complaint. The ordinary troubles of life, which to those who have nothing else to think of are insupportable, will be to her less terrible than to people more engrossed by dissipation, or those of easier circumstances; for it is a certain truth, when the mind is divided among many cares, the anxiety is lighter than where there is only one to be contended with. I am by no means, at the same time, against women's informing themselves in every art or science, if it does not interfere with

with their more important concerns ! and am of opinion, that by keeping company with intelligent men, our sex may gain something, which, embellished with elegance, and softened by modesty, will always add dignity and value to female conversation—But surely it would be folly to labour to gain, what if gained would be useless, or to waste exertion upon objects unworthy of our notice, or that have been left unattained from their futility.

Whoever attempts to acquire reputation by talents useless to society, becomes justly the object of their contempt. I am sure your Highness will agree with me in thinking Socrates had great merit in withdrawing the wits of Greece, by his instructions and example, from the vain pursuits of philosophy, to moral inquiries ; and turning
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ing their thoughts from such studies as were useless to society, to the various modes of virtue and relations of life.

To Mr. Locke, also, have we not great obligations? He lived in an age when learning made a surprising progress in every part of Europe: instead of attempting to improve natural and experimental philosophy, subjects on which some of the greatest men the world ever produced, were then engaged, he left them to investigate the laws of the natural world, and undertook a new branch of science. He made the mind of man his study, developed its faculties, traced the manner of their operations, and delivered more profound truths relating to the intellectual powers, and the conduct of the understanding in the acquisition of knowledge, than are to be met with in all the vo-

lumes of antiquity. When I observe, that during the age of the greatest activity, young men are confined to studies, which are merely speculative; and that they are afterwards suddenly pushed into the world without the least experience; I find it to be a practice contrary both to reason and nature, and am no longer surpris'd so few men are capable of conducting themselves with dignity and propriety through life.—I have always thought our sex had a great superiority in this respect. We are taught by experience, what they learn but imperfectly from *books*. Moral truths are as certain as mathematical. It is as certain that good is not evil, nor evil good, as that a part is less than the whole, or that a circle is not a triangle. Can any thing be more unaccountable, than to spend so much time in teaching them things which
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are quite useless, whilst the great art of accommodating themselves to their situation is quite neglected ! Under a pretence of forming them for society, they are instructed as if each individual were destined to spend his whole life in chimerical speculations : and for this reason, from sixteen to twenty-four, I believe that women are generally more than two years before the men in ripeness of understanding.—I am greatly obliged to the Duke for his advice concerning my affairs. I shall now give your Highness an exact account of my situations, by which you will see the inefficacy of any steps I could take in that affair.

You know I had the misfortune to be married at fourteen to Mr. Pierpont : my sufferings with him, for fifteen years, were greater than I ever communicat-

ed to your Highness. I concealed his faults, lest they should harden him against that sense of shame, which I flattered myself might one day be the means of reclaiming him.

The last years of his life, I was compelled to debar myself the maternal joy of my children's presence ; as the manner in which he treated me before them, was such, as must have deprived me of their respect. And your Highness knows, that parents, in order to preserve their children's veneration for them, should be very careful not to let them see, or suspect any thing in their own conduct, behaviour, or principles, which they would not approve of in others. The profane manner in which Mr. Pierpont treated all serious subjects, must inevitably have eradicated in them every principle of virtue.

To

To commit unjustifiable actions under the influence of ungovernable passions, while at the same time we disapprove of them, is human frailty ; but to establish principles for the vindication of vice, and to inculcate them, is such an infernal effort, as must excite the greatest indignation in every good and virtuous mind. But his unhappy course is run, and, for the first time in my life, in obedience to your Highness's commands, I *paint* what I suffered in my connection with him. Sir Timothy Upton, from whom he possessed the estate of Mount Mirtle, in Shropshire, left it him under this condition, that if he or any of his successors died intestate, it was to devolve to the London Hospital. To that hospital it must go ; for no solicitations on my part could induce him to make a will. In consequence of this omission,

as his own private affairs had been greatly involved, before his accession to this estate, I find myself at this time, only in possession of three hundred pounds a year, to support my family. But I shall bring up my children to a humble fortune, and they will be contented with it : I accustom my girls in their dress to a plain and practicable neatness, and also to despise what many others think necessary. And I have, above all things, instructed them, it is a sign of a mean and low genius, to be uneasy because they cannot have such a gown, or such a cap : that a just understanding always rejects excessive delicacy ; it treats little matters as little, and is not at all hurt by them : and that none deserve happiness, or indeed are capable of it, who make any particular station a necessary ingredient. Your Highness
may

may recollect in what dangerous situations Mr. Pierpont used to place me with the very man, to whom he suspected I was partial. A virtuous mind may be *surprised* without being *subdued*. —I struggled against my heart, conquered it, and am happy. Every thing we ought to do, I firmly believe we shall be enabled to do, if we set about it properly, and with equal humility and trust in God. I am convinced even a well-founded affection is surmountable, when we have not given it improper encouragement, and when the struggles we make against it are supported by motives of duty.

My husband's conduct exposed me to censure: but a censured person should first seek to be justified to herself, and give but a second place to the world's opinion of her; and in all cases where

the two cannot be reconciled, to prefer the first to the last. If the reflections thrown upon her are just, she ought not only to forgive them, but endeavour to profit by them: if unjust, she ought to despise them, and the person who makes them, since it would be inexcusable to strengthen by anger an enemy, whose malice will be disarmed by contempt. As the world judged without knowing, it was unjust, without offending me—but difficult situations often make seeming occasions for censure unavoidable: which the candid will allow for.

It is the fate of unequal unions, that persons not naturally of bad dispositions, through them often incur censure; who, more happily yoked, would be entitled to praise. There are qualities, which are quite unobserved in one situation,

tion, by the very people who would admire them in another, where certain advantageous circumstances serve as glasses to assist their sight.

At Spa, I contracted an intimate friendship with a young lady, who I afterwards saw at the English nunnery at this place: she made me acquainted with a nun, whose name is Christini, and is now lady abbess.—Were your Highness to see her, you would confess a nunnery was no confinement: few female figures have so much beauty, or as much grace: there is in her countenance an expression of sweetness, and good sense, which will hardly be equalled in thousands of her sex. But the beauties of the mind, which beamed forth in her face, the sweet serenity which enlivened the monastic air of seriousness, which was diffused over her fine features, entirely captivated my heart.

I found she was in the highest esteem : this determined me to leave my three girls under her care. After my husband's death, I have continued them there, from an æconomical scheme, as I could not afford to have them so well educated at home. I have always thought, that the French ladies being brought up in convents, where books are the only refuge they have from silence and tediousness, is attended with the greatest advantages to them : and, as they have generally lively parts, they cannot fail to improve, by this best of all methods ; which is rendered more effectual by the time solitude affords them to reflection what they read. It was an admirable reflection of Montefquieu's, " *Il ne s'agit pas de faire lire, (says he) mais de faire penser.*" The age young ladies are, when generally

rally placed in convents, is after they have acquired a habit of reflection from being in company at home : having contracted ideas, they have now leisure to inquire into them, and to distinguish between true rectitude, and false principles, sanctified by fashion and folly. This will place them above that trifling disposition, too common among young women ; which makes even youth ridiculous, and maturity insignificant ; but old age altogether contemptible. I apprehend, it is for this reason, that the French ladies (in regard to intellectual accomplishments) are much superior to others, who have not had the same advantages of education. The king of Prussia affords an instance in point : he was certainly born with more than common abilities ; but that he has cultivated them with greater diligence, was
pro-

probably the effect of his peculiar condition (his being so long confined in prison by his father) of that, which he then considered as cruelty and oppression. Queen Elizabeth also underwent a severe education, and to this it was wholly owing the figure she made afterwards.

You are perhaps, surpris'd that I should leave my daughters at a convent, lest they should imbibe prejudices in favour of the Roman catholic religion: *our* charity is more extensive than *yours*: I do not apprehend my girls in any danger, as you would do yours at a protestant school. Pity is it, my dear friend, that different nations of the world, though of different persuasions, did not more than they do, consider themselves the creatures of one God, the Sovereign of a thousand worlds. Geographers dividing the world into thirty parts,

parts, give us this account of them, that but five of those thirty are christians: and, for the rest, six of them are Jews, and Mahometan; and the remaining nineteen heathen. Is not this a lesson to be upon our guard, in limiting the mercies of God? It is extremely useful to go abroad sometimes to wear off prejudices.

I know your Highness will pardon the freedom with which I write: but you yourself have acknowledged, the most violent prejudices accompany the the blindest ignorance. There is nothing weak, or melancholy, or constrained in true religion—it enlarges the heart, it is simple and lovely.

The kingdom of God, does not consist in a scrupulous observation of *little punctilios*, but in the *exercise* of the virtues proper to each man, *state*, and *vocation*.

I shall

I shall make you no compliments on your candour. I desire you only to delineate in your fancy, the sincerest, and most ardent effusion of tenderness and friendship, and believe it springs from the heart of

Your Highness's

affectionate, obliged,

humble servant,



ANNA PIERPONT.

N. B. My girls wait impatiently for you Highness's Family Narrative.—Do not think of answering my *béniſſe*.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

